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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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JULY 7, 1986

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Doctor Overdose

This week's prize for gall goes to the American Medical Association, for its new report warning that there is a "surplus of physicians" in the United States. From 1965 to 1984 the number of doctors almost doubled, from 292,000 to 537,000, and the ratio of doctors to general population rose by half. Increases are expected to continue. The AMA predicts a "surplus" of 145,000 doctors by the year 2000. The association warns that having too many doctors "could lower the quality and raise the cost of physicians' services."

The doctors' real concern is a bit different. Partly because of competitive pressure, their incomes have started to shrink. Don't panic: the average doctor still made $108,000 in 1984. But after inflation this was a two-percent drop from the year before. As a lay person, you may think there's no law that says doctors' incomes, which doubled in real terms during the 1960s and 1970s—the Medicare decades—must never go down. But this is a complex matter, on which you should consult your doctor.

Dr. Arnold Relman, editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, America's most prestigious medical journal, explained to the *New York Times*: "All over the country, doctors are more concerned about their economic future than I can ever remember. There is more pressure on the doctor to maintain his income than is good for the public or the profession." Relman called on medical schools to end the "growing glut" by reducing the size of their classes.

It is especially touching to hear this concern about the dire effects of fewer dollar transplants from patients to doctors being expressed by Dr. Relman. This same Dr. Relman has led the campaign against commercial hospital chains. ("The medical-industrial complex," he calls them.) In a recent National Academy of Sciences report on the growth of for-profit hospitals, Princeton economics professor Uwe Reinhardt notes that the official medical establishment position is that doctors should be independent, profit-maximizing entrepreneurs, while hospitals should be nonprofit, tax-subsidized charities. He observes that "piece-rate compensation" (his tart but accurate description of fee-for-service medicine) is regarded as "the sine qua non of high quality medical care," and observes that doctors' offices generally have signs demanding immediate cash payment for every service rendered. "We have here a profession that openly professes that its members are unlikely to do their best unless they are rewarded in cold cash for every little ministration rendered their patients."

According to a poll, only 12 percent of the general public thinks there are too many doctors, whereas almost half of all doctors think there are too many doctors and three-quarters think there are too many in some specialties. The AMA takes this as evidence of the need for public education about the doctor surplus. I take it as human nature. In my opinion, there are too many columnists, and I would like to see drastic steps taken to reduce future entry into the profession.

Like all special pleaders for protection from competition, the AMA begins by expressing its great love of the free market. But it argues that the free market only works "in an environment free of external regulation," and in the market for doctors, "Entry into the profession is largely controlled by policies set in the public sector." That's true. But the main effect of those policies is to *restrict* the number of doctors. There are thousands of qualified people every year who would like to become doctors but can't get into medical school because there isn't room. The AMA just wants the squeeze to be even tighter.

It's also true that certain government policies over the past couple of decades have enticed people into becoming doctors. These policies—the comically misdesigned Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement systems—have artificially inflated doctors' incomes, making the profession more appealing. But lower pay is one sure method of reducing the supply of doctors that doctors emphatically reject.

Because of a justified fear of the anti-trust laws, the AMA's proposals are written in a kind of code. "Manpower policies should be redirected," the report says. The AMA should "take a more active stance." Medical schools should be "encouraged" to "review current data and analyses" and "establish appropriately total medical school enrollment." But the agenda is clear: fewer admissions to medical school.

The AMA's problem is that would-be doctors are evading this bottleneck by going to medical school abroad. It surely is insane for the United States to be sending many of its future doctors to Third World countries for their training. But the AMA's solution—make it harder for foreign medical graduates to practice here—is deeply hypocritical. In the context of a report about a supposed doctor surplus, the AMA's unctuous "concern . . . about the quality of training" at foreign medical schools stands revealed for what it is: a simple attempt to reduce the competition.

How, in defiance of all economic logic, can an increase in the supply of doctors lead to higher prices for medical care? The AMA notes correctly that this is precisely what has happened in the recent past. It also speculates that increased competition in certain specialties may drive specialists into general practice, and "since specialists tend to charge more . . . the cost of primary care would increase."

This assumes that doctors can charge whatever they want and get away with it. To some extent, that's true. Has anyone ever price-shopped for a coronary bypass? But recent income data suggest there may finally be so many doctors competing that they can no longer make up for fewer patients by charging more to each one. Meanwhile, the AMA has fought against every effort to introduce market forces into medicine, such as the growth of health maintenance organizations.

In 1964 the AMA hired an actor named Ronald Reagan to denounce Medicare as a "socialist threat." Now it babbles in true socialist spirit about the need to "coordinate all . . . levels of decision-making so that the best . . . policy is implemented." In fact, the AMA's main function throughout its history has been to maintain doctors' incomes by restricting entry into the profession. I'm not going to worry about a surplus of doctors until I can see one without twiddling my thumbs in the waiting room for an hour.

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CORRESPONDENCE

WAR OVER THE WAR

To the editors:

TRB'S "No White Feather, Please" (June 16) contains inaccurate and insensitive assertions regarding Vietnam veterans. As part of my doctoral dissertation on Vietnam veterans I have reviewed the literature on their return home, and nowhere does this literature support the claim in TRB that only a "small fraction" have had "readjustment problems." Although there are differing views in this literature about whether a large percentage of veterans have severe and disabling problems that can be traced to the war, there is a consensus that a substantial percentage of veterans have had some difficulties readjusting—estimates range from 20 percent to 60 percent.

Most offensively, TRB claims that these "thousands" of vets "hanging out" at vet centers are "wasting their lives." The literature, and dozens of conversations I have had with vets, suggest to the contrary that these centers, in striking contrast to the traditional services provided by the Veterans Administration, are the only place where veterans feel they have been helped.

The larger point TRB and others seem to be making is that many veterans, with the help of the media, have been using the war as an excuse for not getting on with their lives. There may be some truth in this claim for some veterans. But the question of how many vets are using the war as an excuse is complex and difficult. The answer is illuminated by listening carefully, and compassionately, to veterans, not by making misinformed and arrogant assertions.

RICK WEISSBOURD
Cambridge, Massachusetts

To the editors:

Michael Kinsley's article on not having been a veteran of the last war demonstrates a sensible old point: the best defense is a good offense.

"Ninety-two percent of my male age cohort" didn't serve either, Kinsley whines. Besides, the real blame belongs to protesters at Harvard and Columbia who didn't do enough to stop the war. He charges that this truth has been unjustly "twisted" by those who argue that it's the protesters who are to blame for undermining popular support for the war. And then the wounded cry—possible only because time deadens the memory of the devastating effect protests at home had on our POWs and soldiers in the field—that the demonstrators cared very deeply about the fate of American servicemen. Kinsley attacks "conservative ideologues" because they won't criticize Vietnam veterans who blame their own problems on society. And, on the subject of vets, he says it was actually a pretty good war, a fact illustrated by a pollster who found in 1980 that 91 percent "were glad they went."

The real reason Kinsley's piece appears now is plain: the nation's growing willingness to use military force in defense of American interests is giving those who hearken back fondly to the Vietnam protests a real big chill. Perhaps they did not win the larger dispute over Vietnam—the debate about the future of American foreign policy. Perhaps history will be much harsher on them than they had once expected.

Kinsley defends himself against a ghostly accusation of cowardice by attacking those who have, and do, argue for the activist approach to foreign policy known in its current form as the Reagan Doctrine. If the best defense is a good offense in rhetoric, why should it be any different in the world of action?

SETH CROPSEY
Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy
Washington, D.C.

MORE SALT, PLEASE

To the editors:

I agree with your June 23 editorial "Sacrificing SALT" that the ABM treaty is the most important accord of the nuclear age. I expect that it will be the next target for the administration's decontrol effort. I strongly disagree, however, with your view that the president's recent SALT decision is of little consequence for our military security. You say that SALT II was merely a "codification" of the arms race. That would not be a completely unfair assessment in 1979. But now it is 1986, and each superpower is right up against some of the most important numerical limitations of SALT.

SALT bans deliberate concealment from and interference with technical means of verification. If SALT is dead, we will know less about Soviet forces. Our military planners who welcome predictability have supported SALT. Without agreed limits on Soviet forces, they may urge the president to plan for the worst: a massive expansion of the Soviet arsenal.

SALT has required the Soviets to dismantle, destroy, withdraw, or convert nearly 1,400 strategic systems. SALT II has prevented the Soviets from increasing their strategic nuclear delivery vehicles from above their 1979 level of 2,504 (and would have mandated a reduction down to 2,250 if we had ratified it). Now they are up against the limit of 820 MIRVed land-based missiles, the most dangerous weapons in their arsenal. Now is the time that keeping SALT II would pay the highest dividends.

Losing SALT might not be such a tragedy if an adequate replacement were in sight. But there is no sign of movement at Geneva. We are unlikely to get reductions in destabilizing nuclear forces if we junk the only available baseline from which to reduce. I suspect that this is precisely what arms control opponents in the administration had in mind.

GERARD C. SMITH
Chairman, The Arms Control Association
Washington, D.C.

FRIEND OF THE IRA

To the editors:

In his article "Killing Confusion," (TNR, June 2) in support of the U.S.-U.K. extradition treaty, Thomas O. Melia bases his argument that the U.S. should extradite IRA fugitives almost entirely upon the premise that Britain is a "democracy" and British-governed Northern Ireland is a "democratically governed community."

Britain may be a democracy, but the British system of justice in Northern Ireland to which Mr. Melia would so readily hand over Irish rebels bears few of the hallmarks of a democratic society. "Emergency" legislation permits British soldiers to arrest people without probable cause and detain them for days on end without charge. The same troops regularly conduct warrantless searches at gunpoint of persons, homes, and automobiles. Special one-judge, juryless courts have convicted hundreds of people on the uncorroborated word of persons who received inducements for their testimony. Reports of torture at British interrogation centers have been the sub-

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
JULY 7, 1986

THE LAUNCH CRISIS

One of the most fascinating features of the Reagan administration has been its success in inducing a kind of collective cognitive dissonance in the American people. Things that should be thought of together are thought of apart. Connections aren't made. This is true of our foreign policy, our defense policy, our economic policy. And now it is true of our space policy, too. Neither the administration nor the public appears to have associated America's spectacular failure to launch anything beyond the atmosphere (even the Smithsonian's reproduction of a pterodactyl came back down) with our spectacular plans for the relocation of our national security into space, or even with the more mundane problems of our national security on earth.

As usual, some of the fault is the media's. Reporters have directed their hunger for sensation upon the great melodrama of the Challenger—upon the catastrophe itself, and upon the commission that investigated the catastrophe. To judge by the seven o'clock news, the most pressing question put by the Challenger is the question of manned or unmanned flight into space. (Not to mention the matter of maverick commission member Dr. Richard Feynmann's aggravated relations with mandarin commission director William Rogers.) It is an important question, but a tad academic at a time when we seem incapable of any flight into space at all. First the Challenger, on January 28; then the Titan, on April 18 (the second Titan failure in a row, by the way); then the Delta, on May 3; then the pterodactyl. And then the Ariadne, the French rocket that lifts commercial satellites into space, didn't make it either. Gravity, in short, has turned against the West.

There are at least three important areas of national security that must be affected by the American launch crisis. The first, most obviously, is the Strategic Defense Initiative. Estimates vary about the precise number of satellites and other gadgets required for a space-based defense against ballistic missiles. Some say hundreds, others say thousands. But the numbers, again, are moot when we face a period of a year or two in which nothing can be successfully lofted to the stars. Some supporters of SDI, particularly those who have had no compunctions about exaggerating its benefits in the past, have characteristically seen in the launch crisis only a confirmation of their own hype. "It reflects on the vulnerability of offensive arms," Robert Jastrow said, as if it reflects not at all upon the feasibility of SDI. But as William Broad showed exhaustively in the *New York Times,* the doubt that should be inspired about SDI is vast. And many of the scientists and engineers involved in research into space-based defenses are not averse to admitting it.

The administration's obsession with Star Wars is a little understandable. It came to power, after all, in part by promising to restore America's strategic strength and survivability, particularly in its land-based missile force, and so far it has accomplished precisely nothing toward that end. America's strategic forces in 1986 are virtually what they were in 1979. But the official obsession with SDI now threatens to overwhelm some of the more immediate concerns that the launch crisis should occasion. The inability to put satellites in space will have a dimming to devastating effect upon America's intelligence capabilities. Precisely when the technology of modern weaponry requires more and better means of monitoring the development of the enemy's arsenal, we shall have fewer and the same. And, as Broad observed, the Star Wars fundamentalists may be expected to pressure policymakers into preferring the launch of SDI tests to the launch of communications and spy satellites.

SDI needs a few fancy successes in experiments to survive in its present, pampered state beyond the end of Ronald Reagan's presidency. But these days, when it comes to rockets, we live in an age of scarcity. The United States already has a significant backlog of "payloads" that are essential to our security but have nothing to do with SDI. It should seem obvious that the first priority of those responsible for our launch programs should be to maintain the military means in space that are required for our security now, rather than committing what little launching ability we will have for the next few years to fantasies about the future.

And the launch crisis may have other consequences, too. It may effect arms control, for example. The alarmists about verification may have more of a point than they ever wished

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341214. Haydn: Symphony No. 100 (Military), **No. 104** (London)—Hogwood and Acad. of Ancient Music (*Digital*—L'Oiseau-Lyre)

332569. Haydn: Symphony No. 94 (Surprise), **No. 100** (Military)—Solti, London Phil. (*Digital*—London)

MAHLER

334508. Mahler: Symphony No. 1 (Titan)—Muti cond. Philadelphia Orch. (*Digital*—Angel)

329094-399097. Mahler: Symphony No. 2 (Resurrection)—Lorin Maazel, Vienna Phil. (Counts as 2—*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

317685. Mahler: Symphony No. 4—Ameling (soprano); Previn and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orch. (Angel)

325357. Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde—soloists, New York Philharmonic under Bruno Walter (Masterworks Portrait)

MENDELSSOHN

318824. Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 (Italian); **Schumann: Symphony No. 4**—Tennstedt, Berlin Phil. (*Digital*—Angel)

330142. Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto; Saint-Saens: Concerto No. 3—Cho-Liang Lin, violinist; Thomas, Philharmonia Orch. (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

332056. Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream; etc.—Zinman, Rochester Philharmonic (*Digital*—Vox Cum Laude)

MOZART

337782. Mozart: Divertimento, K. 563—Kremer; Kashkashian; Yo-Yo Ma (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

294264. Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 21 (Elvira Madigan) and **No. 17**—Ashkenazy plays, conducts Philharmonia Or. (London)

328740. Mozart: Piano Concerto 26 (Coronation); **Rondos**—Murray Perahia, English Chamber Orchestra (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

341628-391623. Mozart: Sonatas For Fortepiano & Violin, Vol. 3—Bilson and Luca (Counts as 2—*Digital*—Nonesuch)

339366. Mozart: Eine Kleine Nachtmusik; more. Hogwood, Acad. Ancient Music (*Digital* L'Oiseau-Lyre)

341974. Mozart: Music For Wind Quintet—played by Ensemble Wien-Berlin (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

321224. Mozart: Overtures—Don Giovanni, Cosi fan tutte; etc. Marriner, Acad. St. Martin (*Digital*—Angel)

338723. Mozart: Requiem—Hogwood cond. soloists, chorus, Acad. of Ancient Music (*Digital* L'Oiseau-Lyre)

340596. Mozart: Sonata, K. 448; Schubert: Fantasia Radu Lupu, Murray Perahia (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

314955. Mozart: Symphonies No. 40 & 41 (Jupiter)—George Szell conducts the Cleveland Orchestra (CBS Great Performances)

RACHMANINOFF

334540. Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No. 2; Rhapsody On A Theme Of Paganini—Cecile Licad; Abbado, Chicago Symph. (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

334565. Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 2 (complete version)—Simon Rattle and Los Angeles Philharmonic (*Digital*—Angel)

SCHUBERT

343707. Schubert: The Impromptus, Op. 90 & 142—Murray Perahia, piano (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

325092. Schubert: Sonata in B Flat; etc.—Alicia de Larrocha (*Digital*—London)

339358. Schubert: Trout Quintet—Andras Schiff, piano; Alois Posch; Hagen Quartet (*Digital*—London)

TCHAIKOVSKY

308874. Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 1—Gavrilov; Kitaenko cond. (Columbia/Melodiya)

329169. Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4—Lorin Maazel, Cleveland Orch. (CBS Masterworks)

343350. Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5; Voyevode—Abbado, Chicago Sym. (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

304352-394353. Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker—Davis, Toronto Symphony (Counts as 2—Columbia)

342329. Bartok: Miraculous Mandarin (complete ballet) **Music For Strings, Percussion & Celesta**—Dorati, Detroit Sym. (*Digital*—London)

342337. Bartok: Piano Concerto No. 1; Sonata For 2 Pianos & Percussion—Ashkenazy; Solti, London Phil. (*Digital*—London)

343145. Bolling: Original Ragtime—*the composer at the piano* (CBS)

263293. Bolling: Suite For Flute & Jazz Piano—Jean-Pierre Rampal and Claude Bolling perform in this all-time best-seller (Columbia)

324533. Respighi: Feste Romane; Pines & Fountain Of Rome—Dutoit, Orch. de Montreal (*Digital*—Londor

333450. Shostakovich: Symphony No. 8—Haitink, Amsterdam Concertgebouw (*Digital*—London)

326405. Stravinsky: The Firebird (complete ballet)—Christoph von Dohnany and the Vienna Philharmonic (*Digital*—London)

338244. Stravinsky: Rite Of Spring; Symphonies Of Wind Instruments—Dutoit, Montreal Symphor Orch. (*Digital*—London)

342154. Tchaikovsky: Romeo & Juliet; Francesca da Rimini—R. Chailly and the Cleveland Orchestra (*Digital*—London)

334680. Tchaikovsky: Suites From "Swan Lake" and "Sleeping Beauty"—Muti and the Philadelphia Orch. (*Digital*—Angel)

336461. Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto; Serenade—Pinchas Zukerman; Zubin Mehta, Israel Philharmonic (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

BAROQUE

323543. Handel: Royal Fireworks Music; Oboe Concertos 1-3—Karl Munchinger, Stuttgart Chamber Orch. (*Digital*—London)

329615. Handel: Water Music. Malgorie, La Grande Ecurie & la Chambre duRoy (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

339663. Pachelbel: Kanon—also works by Albinoni, Bach, Boccherini, others. Karl Munchinger and the Stuttgart Chamber Orch. (*Digital*—London)

343715. Vivaldi: Four Seasons—Lorin Maazel conducts soloists from the French National Orchestra (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

332544. Vivaldi: 6 Flute Concerti, Op. 10—Rampal; Scimone, I Solisti Veneti (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

MODERN

340216. Adams, John: Harmonielehre—Edo de Waart, San Francisco Sym. (*Digital*—Nonesuch)

326439. Copland: Rodeo; Dance Symphony; El Salon Mexico; Fanfare for Common Man—Dorati, Detroit Sym. (*Digital*—London)

240473. Copland: Appalachian Spring (complete)—Copland and London Symphony (Columbia)

326488. Gershwin: Porgy & Bess Suite; Second Rhapsody; Cuban Overture—Previn, London Symph. (*Digital*—Angel)

330886. Grofe: Grand Canyon Suite; Mississippi Suite—Batiz, Royal Philharmonic (*Digital*—Angel)

340182. Glass, Philip: Mishima—original music composed for the film (*Digital*—Nonesuch)

319004. Glass, Philip: The Photographer—"Some of his best music to date"—*Time* (CBS)

326272. Holst: The Planets—Bernstein, New York Phil. (CBS Great Performances)

342022. Ravel: Gaspard de la Nuit; Pavane Pour Une Infante Defunte; others—Vladimir Ashkenazy at the piano (*Digital*—London)

318451. Ravel: Bolero; Pavane; Daphnis Et Chloe (Suite No. 2)—Andre Previn, London Symphony (Angel)

331447. Ravel: Ma Mere L'Oye (Mother Goose); etc.—Dutoit, Montreal Sym. (*Digital*—London)

340190. Reich: The Desert Music—M. Tilson Thomas, members of the Brooklyn Phil. (*Digital*—Nonesuch)

ROMANTICS

335547. Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique—Barenboim cond. Berlin Philharmonic (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

331595. Bizet: Carmen Suite; L'Arlesienne Suites 1, 2—Ozawa, Orch. National (*Digital*—Angel)

333518. Bruckner: Symphony No. 7—Chailly, RSO Berlin (*Digital*—London)

339374. Chopin: Piano Concerto No. 2; Schumann: Piano Concerto—Schiff; Dorati, Concertgebouw (*Digital*—London)

329144. Chopin: Waltzes, Mazurkas, Polonaises—Ivan Moravec, piano (*Digital*—Vox Cum Laude)

343152-393157. Chopin: Nocturnes—Abbey Simon at the piano (Counts as 2—Vox Cum Laude)

326454. Dvorak: Cello Concerto; Bruch: Kol Nidrei—Harrell, cello; Ashkenazy cond. (*Digital*—London)

333526-393520. Dvorak: Slavonic Dances, etc. Dorati, Royal Phil. (Counts as 2—*Digital*—London)

325183. Dvorak: Symphony No. 9 (New World)—Solti, Chicago Symph. Orch. (*Digital*—London)

333575. Elgar: Enigma Variations; Pomp And Circumstances Marches—A. Davis, Philharmonia Or. (*Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

336990. Grieg: Peer Gynt (Incidental Music)—Lucia Popp; Marriner, Academy St. Martin (*Digital*—Angel)

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0257. Liszt: Piano ncertos Nos. 1 & 2— iet; Zinman, Rochester l. (Vox Cum Laude)

1190. Liszt: Hungarian apsodies 1 & 4; more skovsky, Philharmonia ngarica (Angel)

2114. Mussorgsky: tures At An Exhibition; c. Ashkenazy conducts orchestration of "Pic- res" *(Digital*—London)

8228. Offenbach: Gaite risienne; Gounod: aust" Ballet Music— utoit, Orch. symphonique ontreal *(Digital*—London)

334771. Sibelius: Symphonies No. 4 and **7**— Berglund, Helsinki Philharmonic Or. *(Digital*—Angel)

225888. Smetana: Moldau, Bartered Bride Overture, Dances; etc. Bernstein, NY. Phil. (Columbia)

310870-390872. Johann Strauss' Greatest Waltzes —*Blue Danube*, others. Ormandy, Szell, Bernstein (Counts as 2—Columbia)

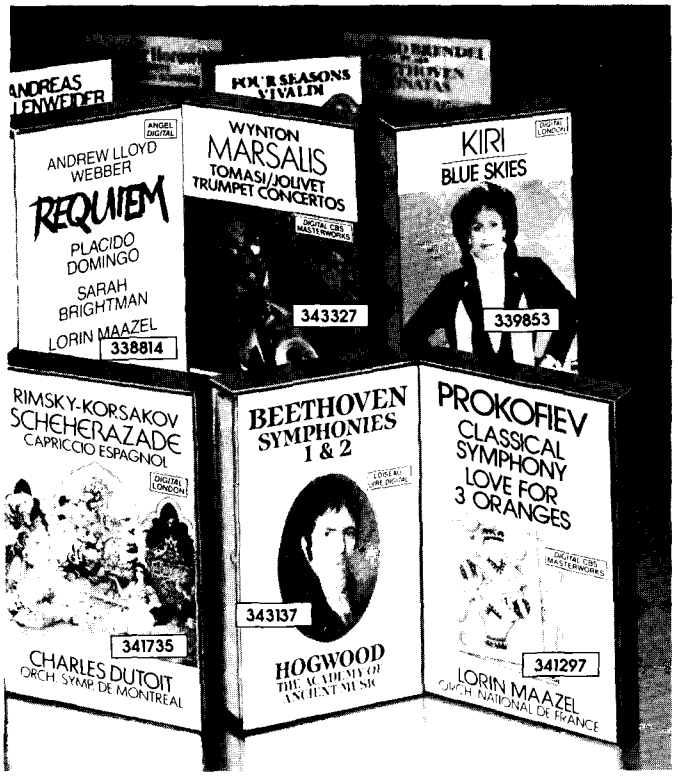
341610. Strauss, Richard: Der Rosenkavalier Suite; Die Frau Ohne Schatten— Dorati, Detroit Symphony Orch. *(Digital*—London)

325886. Liona Boyd—Live In Tokyo. Works by Dowland, Soler, Falla, etc. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

334482. Calliope • Dances —A Renaissance Revel. 16th & 17th century music by Praetorius, Henry VIII, etc. *(Digital*—Nonesuch)

336149. Canadian Brass—Live! Works by Tchaikovsky, Mozart, Pachelbel, others *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

334276. Canadian Brass & Berlin Phil. Brass—Brass In Berlin. Bach, Pachelbel, Gabrieli, etc. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)



142428. Rossini: Overtures —*Semiramide, Barber of Seville*, others. Riccardo Chailly and National Philharmonic *(Digital*—London)

331082. Saint-Saens: Symphony No. 3 (Organ)— Hurford; Dutoit, Montreal Sym. *(Digital*—London)

325100. Saint-Saens: Carnival of the Animals; etc.—Philip Jones Brass Ensemble *(Digital*—London)

323147. Wagner: Orchestral Music from "The Ring"— Sir Georg Solti, Chicago Sym. *(Digital*—London)

310086. Wagner: Overtures —*Flying Dutchman, Rienzi*, etc. Maazel, Philharmonia Orch. (Columbia)

VIRTUOSO!

328013. Nancy Allen— virtuoso harpist in music by Ravel and Debussy. *(Digital*—Angel)

246843. Vladimir Horowitz —New Recordings Of Chopin. (Columbia)

330159. Bob James—Rameau. The jazz artist performs Rameau's music on synthesizers. Superb! *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

326595. Igor Kipnis—Music For The Kings Of France. *Harpsichord suites* by Marchand, Couperin (Nonesuch Silver Series)

339408. Hubert Laws/Chick Corea/Quincy Jones. Blanchard New Earth Sonata; etc. (CBS Masterworks)

331314. Katia & Marielle Labeque Play Gershwin. Also included: Grainger's *Fantasy On Porgy & Bess* *(Digital*—Angel)

343624. Wynton Marsalis Plays Trumpet Concertos. Haydn, Hummel, L. Mozart. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

329607. Wynton Marsalis— Purcell, Handel, Torelli, etc. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

331959-391953. Mormon Tabernacle Choir-Great Choruses of Bach and Handel. (Counts as 2—CBS Masterworks)

326611. Christopher Parkening—Sacred Music For The Guitar. Mozart, Bach, etc. *(Digital*—Angel)

338178. Christopher Parkening—A Bach Celebration. Arrangements for solo guitar and chamber orchestra *(Digital*—Angel)

343186. Anthony & Joseph Paratore—Opera Festival For Four Hands. Music by Rossini, Suppe, Mozart, etc. (CBS Masterworks)

280610. Jean-Pierre Rampal—Greatest Hits. Handel's *Largo*; Gounod's *Ave Maria*, etc. (Columbia)

335695. Fascinatin' Rampal —Jean-Pierre Rampal Plays Gershwin. (CBS)

326470. Joshua Rifkin Plays Digital Ragtime. Scott Joplin's *The Entertainer, Maple Leaf Rag*, etc. (Angel)

331132. Andres Segovia—Espana. Works by Granados, Albeniz, Rodrigo, etc. (MCA)

333112. Andreas Vollenweider—White Winds. The inventive harpist's latest *(Digital*—CBS)

343673. Andre Watts—Live In Tokyo. Music by Brahms, Haydn, Ravel, etc. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

334763. John Williams—Bach, Handel, Marcello Concertos *arr. for guitar* *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

VOCAL AND ORCHESTRAL COLLECTIONS

331942. The Academy—By Request. Marriner and Academy of St. Martin. Bach, etc. *(Digital*—Angel)

308890-398891. Bernstein Conducts World's Greatest Marches. (Counts as 2—Columbia)

328146. Willi Boskovsky cond. Symphonic Waltzes by R. Strauss, Tchaikovsky, Weber, etc. *(Digital*—Angel)

334839. Maria Callas—Rossini & Donizetti Arias. From *William Tell; L'Elisir D'Amore*, etc. (Angel)

341602. Jose Carreras—French Opera Arias. Arias from *Le Cid, Faust, Carmen*, etc. *(Digital*—Angel)

292003-392001. Curtain Raisers—The World's Favorite Overtures. Szell, Bernstein, Ormandy, etc. (Counts as 2—Columbia)

338756. Ghena Dimitrova—Opera Arias. *Aida, Macbeth, Attila*, etc. *(Digital*—Angel)

337279. Placido Domingo —Save Your Nights For Me. *Love Came For Me; Maria*; etc. (CBS)

326553. Placido Domingo —Great Love Scenes. Scotto, Te Kanawa, etc. (CBS Masterworks)

342402-392407. Gilbert & Sullivan—The Mikado. Sargent, Glyndebourne Festival (Counts as 2—*Digitally remastered*—Angel)

341990. Eva Marton Sings Highlights from Strauss' "Salome"; 4 Last Songs. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

337444. Eugene Ormandy—In Memoriam. Barber's *Adagio for Strings*; works by Sibelius, R. Strauss *(Digital*—Angel)

327551. Luciano Pavarotti —Mamma. Popular Italian songs arranged by Henry Mancini *(Digital*—London)

303453-393454. Pavarotti's Greatest Hits. 26 favorites by Verdi, Puccini, Bizet, etc. (Counts as 2—London)

332106. Lucia Popp Sings Mozart Opera Arias. Slatkin, Munich Radio Orch. *(Digital*—Angel)

339242. Puccini Heroines. Eva Marton, Renata Scotto, Katia Ricciarelli, others (CBS Masterworks)

335455. Portrait of Frederica Von Stade. Rossini, Mozart, Brahms, etc. (CBS Masterworks)

343269. Kiri Te Kanawa—Verdi and Puccini Arias. Pritchard, London Phil. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

324772. Kiri Te Kanawa—Songs of the Auvergne, Vol. 1—Canteloube's songs *(Digital*—London)

341669-391664. Themes From Masterpiece Theatre Vols. 1 & 2 (Counts as 2 —*Digital*—Sine Qua Non)

321844-391847. Verdi: La Traviata. Movie soundtrack with Domingo, Stratas, etc. (Counts as 2—Elektra)

328716-398719. Verdi: Requiem. Caballe, Berini, Domingo, Plishka; Mehta, cond. *(Digital*—Counts as 2—CBS Masterworks)

340562. Waverly Consort —Renaissance Favorites. Gibbons, Morley, Des Prez *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

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to have. How will the United States have any confidence in its technical verification of arms control agreements (the administration is acting, after all, as if there is movement in Geneva) without enough eyes and ears?

Intelligence and communication, arms control, space-based defenses—these are only some of the elements of our national defense that have been thrown into uncertainty by the wicked way the gods have toyed with our rockets. The cumulative consequence of the disasters, then, should be sobriety. But sobriety, particularly about technology, is an emotion that has no place in the hearts of our planners and policymakers. "The advance of technology is inexorable," intones Dr. Gerald Yonas, the chief scientist at SDI. Well, yes. Except that we are talking about government, not technology; and government is not an activity that should be regarded under the aspect of eternity. It has immediate tasks, daily charges, short-term obligations, practical matters. National security is high among them. Is it really Luddism, or an absence of patriotism, to suggest, after Challenger, after Titan, after Delta, after Ariadne, that the United States should be a bit more humble in its planning, that our worship of technology should be a little modified by our wisdom about the way things in the world really work? Go, go, go may not be the most thoughtful way to go. For years, in the matter of space, it has been morning in America. But now, much as our officials may not want to hear it, it is, beneath all those fiery, wayward plumes in all those blue skies, the morning after.

NOTEBOOK

□ THE SLEAZEBALL WATCH: Here's an inspiring story for you, presented on the Style page of the *Washington Post* under the headline "Return from the Slough of Scandal." The happy life of Representative Tom Evans, Republican of Delaware, and his wife Mary Page fell apart in 1981 when the story broke that Tom Evans had been having an affair with "lobbyist" and *Playboy* model Paula Parkinson. Within a year Evans had been voted out of office and, on top of everything else, his house burned down. But (reports the *Post*), "Tom, 54, and Mary Page, 49, say their tale is one of hope, of refusing to give up as their world collapsed around them." After an initial despair, Evans picked himself up and found a new career. Can you guess? Yes: "Lobbying suited him; he knew the process and had the access (as a former member, for instance, he's able to use the House gym and steam room). He developed an impressive list of corporate and foreign clients—including Cyprus, Jamaica, and Philip Morris Inc.—and soon caught the attention of Charles Manatt," former chairman of the Democratic National Committee. Today the Evanses are "still married, and in better shape financially and emotionally than they were a decade ago." Tom is a partner in Manatt's firm, "earning a salary well into the six figures for lobbying his former colleagues." Happy ending, Washington-style.

TARGETING SOUTH AFRICA

The events of June 16, 1986, destroyed two remaining delusions about South Africa. The first was that the Botha government is at all in earnest about a genuine break from apartheid. The brutality of the police and army operation provided a useful lesson in the fundamental nature of the Afrikaner regime. The relatively recent attempt of the government to portray itself as a mediator between extreme right-wingers and liberals was revealed for the cant that it was. The second delusion was that, when domestic revolt looms, the South African government is sensitive to external political or moral pressure. The necessity of maintaining power took effortless priority over appeasing "world opinion." "A bug-off approach," as one administration official put it, has applied not only to the United States but also to the Commonwealth's "Eminent Persons Group," which was welcomed by the regime until it released its report predicting "the worst bloodbath since World War II."

But Botha's indifference to the outside world has a certain rationale. The most depressing immediate lesson of the Soweto anniversary is that repression works. There are few successful arguments against a possible force of 400,000 armed law enforcers and the still more effective army of censors. The South African security forces have proved that they can both quell opposition in neighboring states and put at least a temporary lid on incipient rebellion at home. We may be hopeful that the mass rioting of ten years ago is now the organized industrial action of today. But the fact that the opposition's only recourse was one day's "stay-away" is also testimony to the state's abiding power.

Given this apparent impasse, the temptation for the West is either despair or an immediate imposition of large-scale economic sanctions. The proposals of the Commonwealth Group managed to back both. We advocate neither. Whatever the arguments about the effectiveness of specific economic pressures, blowing our leverage in one gesture is hardly a recipe for strategic diplomatic success.

In the short term, two positive projects beckon. One is an interim package of sanctions constructed in association with the more implicated allies, in particular West Germany and Great Britain, designed to send a punitive specific message of resolve to the white population. Full divestment may be emotionally satisfying but runs the risk of clumsy and uncertain effects—especially on the black population. A more focused measure would concentrate on particular and achievable targets: limiting new investments in South Africa and restricting air travel, visas, and the movement of personal assets between countries. The Solarz bill is a good model for such a strategy. A second imperative is to forge close links with the South African labor movement, especially the emergent COSATU, whose disciplined, nonviolent protest was one of the few inspiring features of the last week. The administration should see the parallel with Solidarity in Poland and act upon it. If a third force is to emerge in South Africa, this may well be where its leaders are found.

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THE PRESS

SCRATCH 'N' SNIFF

"I FELL IN love with it"... "The ultimate"... "a great sensation"... "an intense rush"... "unmatched in its euphoria and exhilaration." Who is talking about what here? Is it Rex Reed on Cher? George Bush on his new penny loafers? A Pepsi commercial? The correct answer is cocaine. These quotations, admittedly taken out of context from recent editions of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*, are descriptions of crack, a new and increasingly popular form of smokable cocaine.

Besides informing the public about the thrilling high crack produces, the media have explained how to make crack from powdered cocaine, how much it costs, where it can be bought (the *Washington Post* even printed a detailed map), and how to smoke it. This usually occurs under the guise of a warning. *Newsweek*'s June 16 cover story, "Crack and Crime," offers some nasty anecdotes, including one about "Art F.," who lost his home and family and is now "staying straight and trying to rebuild his life." According to Tom Morgenthau, who wrote the article, Art F. also described great parties he used to have. "I left them out," Morgenthau said. "I don't doubt they were great parties with crack, but I said, let's not glamorize this." Instead, his story is illustrated in part by stark black-and-white photos of addicts vomiting in the street and getting arrested.

But it's tough to deglamorize a phenomenon by publishing two cover stories about it in less than three months, as *Newsweek* has done. Its March 17 article, "Kids and Cocaine," described teenage coke dealers who paid for their new Porsches and Jaguars in cash. "I had all the girls I wanted—I had all the sex I wanted," one said. The cover photograph for "Crack and Crime" shows huge chunks of cocaine spilling onto a black marble table. Scratch 'n' sniff, the picture seems to say. And the article, truth to tell, makes the stuff sound pretty good.

Are *Newsweek* and the *New York Times*, which has run four front-page stories on crack in the past month, discouraging potential users, or piquing their interest? There are no reliable statistics about the spread of "the fast food of drugs," as a frequently quoted expert named Arnold M. Washton calls crack, but drug enforcement officials express concern that the market will increase because of the publicity. *Newsweek*'s most recent story quotes one official from the Drug Enforcement Agency who says, "We feel it's being accelerated by the media hype."

In a preface to the new story, editor-in-chief Richard M. Smith compares drugs to "the plagues of medieval times." "We plan to cover it as a crisis, reporting it as aggressively and returning to it as regularly as we did the struggle for civil rights, the war in Vietnam, and the fall of the Nixon presidency.... The story of crack and the law," Smith writes, "reflects our commitment to share that concern with our readers."

Newsweek has vowed to pursue the lonely struggle against crack no matter how much money it makes. "Kids and Cocaine" was one of *Newsweek*'s most popular issues this year, selling about 15 percent better than average at the newsstand. Other cocaine covers have sold as much as 35 percent above average. Like the Crusades of medieval times, as Smith might put it, *Newsweek*'s antidrug campaign isn't really about religion at all.

Last summer Margaret Thatcher urged democratic nations "to starve the terrorist and the hijacker of the oxygen of publicity on which they depend." Drug trends thrive on the same kind of media attention; wide exposure means victory. Even if most drug users don't look to *Newsweek* for advice on where to buy and how much to pay, it's hardly necessary to make detailed how-to information so readily available.

In their stampede to portray the crack problem as an unprecedented "epidemic," the media miss a crucial point about the narcotics trade. When the popularity of one drug soars, another plummets. Crack's popularity is rising, but heroin and PCP, which are arguably more dangerous, are declining. Crack users seldom die of overdoses or stab their parents during chemically induced homicidal rages. Nor do they spread AIDS with contaminated hypodermic needles. Crack is a frightening new problem, but the fad will eventually fade, as last year's "designer drug" craze already has. In the meantime, let's keep the hysteria down to a dull roar.

JACOB WEISBERG

THE MONEY CULTURE

GETTING DINGED

ONE, TWO, TEN years from now—whenever the Fall occurs—chroniclers of the age of tycoonery will look back on the story of the Henley Group, scratch their heads, and wonder, "How could it have happened? How could investors have sunk $1.2 billion into a company made up of other companies that, all told, don't make a profit now and have little prospect of making one?" These historians will be as puzzled by the Henley saga as we are today by tales of the tulip-bulb mania in Holland in 1634 or the South Sea Bubble of 1720. The moral is that the zeitgeist is a powerful thing. You had to be there to believe it—and, well, here we are.

The Henley Group (this pretentious name was snatched from thin air by its chairman, Michael Dingman) went public on May 20 in the largest initial stock offering in American history. It is a collection of 35 companies that were once divisions of Allied and Signal, two giant conglomerates that merged last year. In 1985 the castoffs (companies that, in the words of one investment analyst, Allied-Signal "didn't

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want and couldn't sell") that make up Henley lost $65.4 million. In 1984 they lost $22.8 million. And the future? "Absent a change in the management or composition of its businesses," says the prospectus, "Henley would, in the opinion of its management, continue to have net losses."

So why was demand for Henley shares so strong that Lazard Freres, which originally had intended to put the company's stock on the market for a total value of $200 million, raised that to $500 million and finally to $1.2 billion? Why did practically every major investment house in the country, from First Boston to Wood Gundy, underwrite the offering? Why did pension funds snatch up the stock? Because Henley, whose various companies do everything from turning garbage into energy to building paper plants and leasing railroad freight cars, is the paradigm of the hottest concept in high finance these days. What sells on Wall Street is not earnings—that is, the profitable operations of a company. What sells is assets. And the idea behind Henley is the rearrangement—the buying and selling and shuffling—of assets, according to the mode of the moment.

The management of Henley, led by Dingman, the former president of Allied-Signal, will be using most of the cash that was raised on May 20 to "finance future acquisitions." Which acquisitions? In which industries? No one much cares at this point. As the prospectus says: "Henley currently has no specific plan for use of such proceeds."

OF COURSE there will be some selling, too. Wall Street isn't calling the Henley Collection "Dingman's dogs" for nothing. "This is really a bet on the reinvestment or improvement on the quality of these assets," says Larry Lytton, an analyst at Drexel Burnham Lambert. "This management team is better equipped to invest $1.5 billion or $5 billion than you or I or any institutional money manager."

In other words, the 35 Henley companies are merely a pretext to give Dingman a lot of money to play with—in the hope that he can turn it into a lot more money for his shareholders. Dingman's special skill is not as a manager or an inventor or an entrepreneur, but as an interpreter of fashion, the Tom Wolfe, the Diana Vreeland of Wall Street. But let Mr. Dingman explain himself: "I think that Henley is pure and simply a mechanism to create value for our shareholders by virtue of participating in fads. . . . You know, the market has multiples just like you have hula hoops and seedless grapes or miniskirts. And multiples are established by analysts, and they say one company is worth seven times earnings, another is worth eight."

("Multiples" represent the actual price of a stock. They indicate how many dollars an investor is willing to pay for a dollar of profits earned by a company. You may think one dollar is as good as another, but the stock market is fussier. For example, since oil companies are out of favor for the moment, Exxon is trading at a multiple, or price-to-earnings ratio, of nine; Chevron is also at nine; Phillips Petroleum, six. Hotel and restaurant chains, on the other hand, are hot: Marriott is trading at a multiple of 28; Hilton, 19; McDonald's, 20.)

Dingman's frank admission came during an interview a few weeks ago on the NBC-TV program "Strictly Business." There's more:

Jeff Madrick (the interviewer): "You have no qualms about selling a concept that's in fashion?"

Dingman: "Absolutely. I think that's what you have to take advantage of."

Madrick: "Just because it's in fashion."

Dingman: "Yes. 'In fashion' is a high multiple. 'Out of fashion' is a low multiple."

Shortly after Henley went public, Dingman announced that he was repackaging four of the 35 companies into a new health-care company called Fisher Scientific, which "could ultimately become a public company in its own right." Since health care is "in fashion" (Johnson & Johnson is trading at a P-E ratio of 42, Merck is at 25), the new company's stock should fetch a high multiple, that is, trade at a high price on the stock exchange.

If, for example, fertilizer comes back in fashion, Dingman may stitch together Signal Methanol and Kellogg, a couple of his Henley companies that turn natural gas into feedstock. He might even buy another fertilizer company. Then he'll take the whole new package public—at 20 or 30 times earnings.

THIS IS Dingman's modus operandi—the pulling apart and sticking together and pulling apart again and sticking together again of companies, all the while keeping an eye on the fashion thermometer to see what's hot.

Consider the odyssey of Wheelabrator-Frye, a euphonious company that Dingman has been pulling apart and putting back together again for the past 17 years. In the go-go year of 1969, Dingman, then a partner in a New York investment firm, bought an interest in a little conglomerate called Equity Corporation, which itself owned two dozen disparate companies. Dingman sold off all but two—Wheelabrator, which made machines that cleaned other machines, and Frye, which made printing ink.

Over the years, Wheelabrator-Frye became a conglomerate on its own as Dingman bought companies in the environmental and energy fields. It was grossing $1.5 billion when, in 1983, Dingman sold the whole thing to a larger conglomerate, Signal Companies, for $900 million. Two years later, Signal, with $6 billion in revenues, merged with Allied Corporation, an even larger conglomerate with $12 billion in revenues. It was the largest industrial merger in U.S. history. Wheelabrator-Frye, of course, went along with the deal, and so did Dingman. He became president of Allied-Signal.

A few months later, Edward Hennessy Jr., the chairman and CEO of Allied, announced that he was spinning off 30 companies that had been part of Allied-Signal into a new company with more than $3 billion in revenues. Dingman would be CEO of the new company, which was eventually named the Henley Group. And, yes, Wheelabrator-Frye was one of the castoffs that made up Henley. I wouldn't be surprised if Dingman decided to spin it off again, maybe even as Wheelabrator and Frye—or, better yet, Weela, Bray, Tor, and Frye. Four separate companies!

For these efforts, Dingman is well paid. After Allied

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bought Signal, he worked out a deal guaranteeing that for five years he would annually earn as much as chairman Hennessy earned—whether Dingman worked or not. The *Wall Street Journal* said insiders were calling the arrangement "a platinum parachute." Dingman's contact, said the *Journal*, "gives him the right to go on 'inactive status'—to stop working but not stop earning. And Mr. Dingman himself has the 'sole' discretion of making himself 'inactive.' " The *Journal* headlined the article: "$1 Million to Work / $1 Million to Loaf."

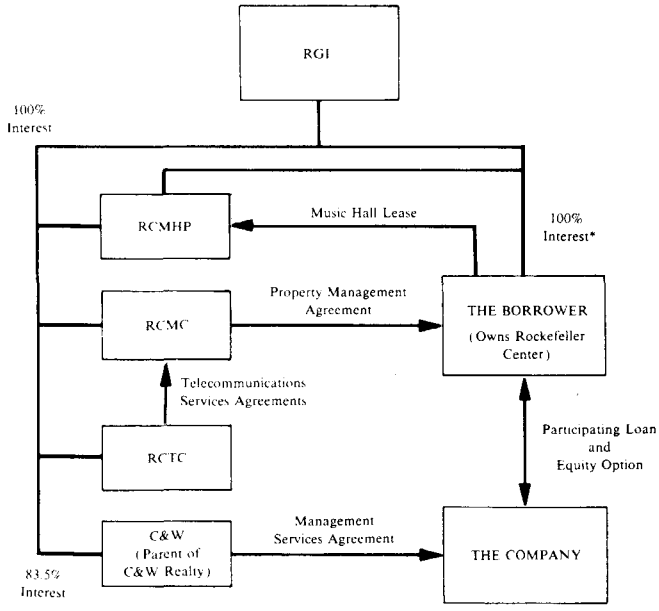
Dingman's incredible deal with Allied-Signal—it also guaranteed him $7.6 million if he didn't succeed Hennessy as chairman—led to a shareholder suit, which was eventually settled with the Henley spinoff. Dingman agreed to take the $7.6 million in Henley stock; his annual salary is now a mere $550,000. Kenneth Gilpin of the *New York Times* wrote that Dingman is "giving up a lot to run Henley." Then, in the next breath, he noted that Dingman will also get options to acquire 7.5 million shares of Henley stock over the next three years—a potential nine-figure arrangement.

And Dingman, a 54-year-old University of Maryland dropout, does more than shuffle assets and count his money. We learn from various articles that he owns a sheep ranch, collects paintings, furniture, toy trains, and antique cars (he owns seven, plus two motorcycles). He's a camera buff, a skier, a yachtsman, and a jogger. He has a new, young wife. He reads mysteries and, says *Business Week*, "hopes to learn the piano, perhaps followed by the violin."

Less busy but more rich are the Rockefellers. They too have been cleverly rearranging assets—actually, one particular asset, Rockefeller Center, 12 buildings built on 12 acres in the middle of Manhattan. Last September the Rockefellers let the public own a piece of their action. In what was then the largest initial public offering of stock in America (later surpassed by Henley), they sold $750 million worth of shares in something called Rockefeller Center Properties. This entity, it turns out if you read the fine print of the prospectus, doesn't exactly own Rockefeller Center. (What exactly you do own is "explained" in the diagram on this page, which is reproduced from the prospectus.) RCP was set up to lend money to the owners of Rockefeller Center, who are, of course, the Rockefellers themselves. In the year 2000, RCP can convert the loan into a 71.5 percent interest in the center. But even after that, the Rockefellers will maintain managerial control of the property. The reason for the stock offering is that there are 81 Rockefeller heirs running around who would like some cash. The reason they're getting it in the form of a loan, apparently, is to enable them to avoid taxes for 14 years.

The prospectus of Rockefeller Center Properties, Inc., is probably the most complicated piece of financial obfuscation I've ever read. Not even the six pages of full-color photographs (one with Christmas tree) lighten the task. The prospectus makes the case that since the current average rental rate for existing leases ($26.75 per square foot) "is substantially less than the rates currently being obtained" elsewhere in New York, it's expected that as new leases are signed, rental income will accelerate mightily. I draw a different lesson from the $26.75 figure: the Rockefellers don't do such a great job managing their property. They, after all, are the ones who signed the leases that brought in the paltry rentals. And they will continue running the joint through 2000 and beyond. Can you trust them with your money?

The reason I bring up the RCP matter at all is that it is yet another example of the mania for assets that's abroad in the land—the mania, especially, for creatively packaged, brand-new assets. First someone cooked up the idea of selling public buildings, which could then be leased back by governments from investors (sale leasebacks). Then we had the creative packaging of loans—mortgages, car loans, and the like. Investment bankers slapped them together, plumped them up, then sliced them and sold them like bologna. Then came the shufflers such as Dingman—the aggregators and disaggregators—the guys who combined



company A with company B and company C, sold company C to company D and took A and B public separately, later buying back C and combining it with E, etc., etc. Now we have the Rockefellers selling somewhat, shall we say, unusual securities.

I suppose there's nothing really antisocial or dangerous in all this. The people who invest in Rockefeller or Henley are old enough to take care of themselves. (By the way, Rockefeller stock went public in September at $20 a share and since then has totally missed the big market run-up, trading between $17.50 and $20.38. Henley came out at $21.25 and has traded between $19 and $21.63.) What I worry about is that mad asset shuffling, rather than taking care of business and trying to make profits, is a sure sign of decadence. Dingman is undoubtedly one of America's smartest men. What kind of economy, what kind of market is it that leads a person of his talent into the gluing and ungluing racket? A market that should be scaring the pants off us.

JAMES K. GLASSMAN

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A rent control nightmare.

THE LANDLORD'S TALE

MANHATTAN'S Upper East Side is an extremely desirable place to live. Easily accessible to midtown, it retains a certain isolated charm. Transportation is a bit complicated and usually involves a long walk to the Lexington Avenue subway, but the streets are safe and clean. High-rise development has not yet crowded the avenues. On a summer day the whole area can take on an almost tropical brilliance.

Living on the Upper East Side can be either very expensive or very cheap, depending on who you are. New York City still operates under rent control, a "temporary" measure originally imposed by the federal government during World War II and never lifted.

A young couple just moving into the neighborhood can expect to pay at least $800 for a studio apartment, $1,200 for a one-bedroom apartment, and $1,500 for two bedrooms. If you have lived in Manhattan for a long time, however—or if you have friends or relatives who are willing to pass on an apartment—you may pay as little as $200 to $300.

Rents in New York are regulated in two ways, and learning the difference is an essential part of becoming a New Yorker. "Rent control," the extension of the wartime era program, only applied to buildings built before 1947. No increases were allowed until 1969, and many tenants in rent-controlled apartments are still paying prices of the 1940s.

In 1969 "rent stabilization" was applied to all apartments built between 1947 and 1969 and has since been extended to cover just about everything that is not already rent-controlled. People in rent-stabilized apartments generally pay prices prevalent in the early 1970s. When a rent-controlled tenant moves or dies—and is unable to pass the apartment on to a friend or relative—the apartment slips into rent-stabilization. There are also "vacancy allowances" and other intricacies that tend to protect sitting tenants and push up rents for newcomers. As a result, people who move to New York today are probably paying prices that are *higher* than they would be without rent regulations.

Ming Wang is an architect who escaped from Shanghai during the Cultural Revolution. She and her husband live in New York and run an architectural firm out of their brownstone on East 87th Street. They have come to love Manhattan's old buildings. Four years ago they spotted a 1906 six-story apartment house that was up for sale a few blocks away. It was run-down, but Wang says she thought that "it was definitely something worth preserving. The building has a beautiful brick facade with lots of stone detail. There is a delicate filagree on the fire escape, and a wraparound courtyard that gives you a window in every room." The Wangs had heard about rent control but hadn't given it much thought. "I assembled an investment group and convinced them it would be a good risk," Ming Wang said.

Of the building's 25 apartments, 13 had two bedrooms and 12 had three bedrooms. Fifteen apartments were rent-controlled, and the rest were stabilized. The rent-stabilized tenants were all paying between $200 and $225, regardless of size, condition, or location in the building. The rent-controlled tenants were all paying less than $100 a month. One long-term tenant was paying $75.19 for five rooms. (Rent-control prices have been allowed to rise in fine calibrations over the last 17 years and are almost always expressed in two decimal points.)

None of Wang's tenants was particularly poor. In fact, most are the kind of upper-middle-class Manhattanites who regularly use rent control as a springboard to a more affluent lifestyle. Two own houses in Florida. One couple even has a "primary-resident" designation on their Sarasota home that exempts them from Florida property taxes. One tenant is a stage mother whose daughter appears frequently in television commercials. Another is an airline stewardess. There are several retired people, but none is without resources. Several pay their rent out of money market accounts.

Altogether, the building's entire rent roll came to less than $3,500 a month. Heating costs alone averaged $1,200 a month, and total expenses, including taxes and mortgages, were around $7,500. "Financially, it obviously wasn't a very attractive deal," said Wang. "We would have to subsidize it out of our own funds for awhile. But we figured that if we did a lot of the work ourselves, we could eventually turn it around."

Politicians and tenant activists like to portray themselves as locked in mortal, hand-to-hand combat with giant developers—the Donald Trumps and Harry Helmsleys. Yet most New York City landlords are small investors like the Wangs. Seventy-five percent of New York's landlords own one building. About 45 percent own fewer than 10 units, and 80 percent own fewer than 50. Helmsley, the city's largest private owner, owns only three percent of the market. He says he can't deal with rent regulations, and is currently liquidating his holdings.

WHEN CONFRONTED with a small owner who is obviously being ruined by the system, politicians and tenant activists always respond with the same question: "Why did you buy the building in the first place?" In this case, the Wangs were enticed by the promise of a loan from the City Department of Housing and Urban Development, which would allow them to rehabilitate the building. Because the city wants to recover its money, landlords who get city loans are allowed to raise their rents. Unfortunately, the Wangs soon discovered that the city was not making any more loans in their neighborhood.

The building was in desperate need of repairs. The roof was leaking into a top-floor apartment. Nothing had been painted in a decade. The previous owner, like many New York landlords, had given up. He had neither repaired the building nor filed the mountains of paperwork required to raise rents.

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The Wangs soon found that no bank would lend them money. "They would look at our rent rolls and say, 'How do you ever expect to pay us back?' " Finally they assembled some funds among friends and spent $130,000 on a new roof, new wiring, new plumbing, outside painting, waterproofing, and a new concrete floor in the basement.

To try to encourage this kind of rehabilitation, New York has instituted the "major capital improvements" (MCI) program, which allows landlords to raise rents in order to recover the costs of repairs. Landlords must first formally ask their tenants if they are willing to pay for repairs to the building. Tenants almost never agree, and so the landlord is allowed to appeal to the state's Department of Housing and Community Renewal *after* the repairs have been completed. The state may then permit rent increases.

In the Wangs' case, the tenants weren't happy about the repairs. "They didn't see the building needed long-term maintenance," said Wang. "All they saw was that their rent was going to go up." And so, after investing $130,000, the Wangs filed for an MCI increase. The instructions for the forms are 16 pages long, and a well-documented MCI application often involves 75 pages of financial records. If the landlord has both rent-controlled and rent-stabilized tenants, separate applications must be submitted for each. In September 1983, the Wangs filed the papers.

BY LAW, they were supposed to have a decision within 90 days. At the time, however, the state DHCR was just setting up shop, after taking over the administration of rent regulations from the city. The department was so overwhelmed by its new responsibilities that it immediately put a moratorium on MCI applications that lasted over a year.

Fifteen months later, the decision for the rent-*controlled* tenants came back. The rents could be increased from an average of $85.00 a month to around $156.00. At that rate the Wangs would recover their $130,000 (without interest) in about five years. However, the city recently had adopted a new rule saying that rent-controlled rents could not be raised more than 15 percent in any one year. The rent-controlled tenants immediately protested, saying their rent increases were too high. The city agreed and rolled back the increases to $13.00 per month, stretching out the Wangs' recovery period to about 35 years.

The MCI application for the rent-*stabilized* tenants, filed in April 1983, came through in December 1985, 30 months after the application. The state allowed rent increases of six percent, and a six percent retroactive raise to make up for the delay in application. This made the rent-stabilized tenants unhappy. They had seen the rent-controlled tenants' increases rolled back, and they protested as well.

In order to delay the rent increases, tenants turned to a tactic that has become very popular among New York's tenantry. It might be called "the violations game." According to the city's rent laws, landlords who have gone through the paperwork and gotten a rent increase approved may not collect if there are any outstanding housing-code violations in the building. These violations need not be very large. A missing lightbulb or a crack in the plaster is usually sufficient. Savvy tenants have long since figured out that if a building has no obvious violations, they can create a few themselves. Stolen lightbulbs and vanishing smoke alarms are a favorite.

"We found that once this violations game starts, it's a revolving door," said Wang. "When a tenant calls the housing inspectors, he gets an appointment on the spot. When a landlord calls to have the violation removed [rent-control argot for having the building certified violation-free], he must often wait six weeks before the inspectors arrive. When they do come, they remove one violation and write down three more. We got violations for things like 'Bicycle under public stairway,' or 'Flowerpots in courtyard.' Once they found a hairline crack in a marble floor. I told them, 'I'll take you down to City Hall and show you the same cracks.' "

An advanced variation on the "violations game" is the "access game." Violations in an individual tenant's apartment must be cleared by having the building inspector visit the apartment. But neither the inspector nor the landlord can enter without the tenant's permission. If the tenant refuses to allow access, or repeatedly misses appointments, rent increases can be delayed almost indefinitely.

"We had one tenant on the top floor whose ceiling had been leaking before we even took over the building," said Wang. "For three years now, he hasn't allowed the building inspector in his apartment. We stopped the leak when we fixed the roof in 1983, but we still haven't gotten the violation removed." Some New York landlords have begun making videotapes of workmen making repairs in order to prove in court that the violations have been corrected.

In the five years since Wang bought the building, three apartments have become vacant—all through the deaths of tenants. Vacancies mean a one-time increase to "fair-market" prices (not to be confused with "free-market" prices). This is why New York City landlords dream of losing their tenants. An empty building is worth six times as much as the same building filled with rent-controlled tenants.

WANG HAS BEEN able to rent all three apartments for over $1,000. In the process she has discovered something remarkable—people who pay the full freight get along fine with their landlords. "They've been the best tenants we have," said Wang. "We've actually become very good friends." Paul and Jean Field, for example, say they are still happy with their apartment after two years. "When we moved here, the other tenants tried to enlist us in the fight against the landlord," said Jean, whose husband runs a small consulting firm out of a basement office. "We listened to both sides, but we finally decided it was the tenants here who are the real problem." One tenant, for example, regularly registered her dissatisfactions by letting her dog defecate in the hallways.

After five years as a landlord, Wang has become obsessed with rent regulations. "You forget why you bought the building," she said. "We wanted to beautify New York, make it a better place to live. Now all I think about is

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who is controlled and who is stabilized, and whether our tenant's primary residence is in New York or Florida."

On a trip to Disney World two years ago, Wang couldn't resist driving over to Sarasota to see her tenant's other home. "It's a beautiful place," she said. "I couldn't afford to live there myself."

WILLIAM TUCKER

William Tucker lives in Brooklyn and is writing a book about rent control.

The Greek tabloid and the KGB.

RED ALL OVER

ALTHOUGH traditionally Justice is portrayed as a blindfolded maiden holding scales, the original Greek goddess of justice, Themis, was not always depicted with her eyes covered. That she might still be a tad selective with her virtue today can be seen from the curious spate of legal action concerning Greece's most popular newspaper, *Ethnos* ("The Nation"). Paul Anastasi, the Athens correspondent for the *New York Times* and London *Daily Telegraph*, contends the newspaper was established with financing and support from the Soviet KGB for the purpose of spreading disinformation.

With a circulation of 180,000, *Ethnos* is Greece's largest daily. On the outside, it is hardly your standard party rag. A lively Murdoch-style tabloid, *Ethnos* revolutionized the tired Greek press when it started publishing in 1981. It combines color pictures, gossip, sports, and sleaze with a heavy dose of what one Greek prosecutor calls "raw Soviet propaganda." *Ethnos* readers learned, for example, that the CIA was behind Indira Gandhi's assassination, that 2,000 people were killed on the first day of the U.S. invasion of Grenada, that KAL flight 007 was a deliberate "provocation" against the Soviets, that East Germany is an "example for East and West," and that the Soviet Union itself is "a genuine democracy . . . the first peace bloc in history." Lately it has given prominence to suggestions that the Americans were behind the murder of Swedish premier Olof Palme and that the Challenger exploded because it was carrying secret SDI equipment to be tested in space. *Ethnos* even refuses to report any action by the Papandreou government with which it does not agree.

The Anastasi affair began back in June 1983 when his book *Take the Nation in Your Hands*, alleging that the KGB was involved in the start-up of the paper, appeared in Greece. Most of the book was based on documents that Anastasi obtained from Yannis Yannikos, a Greek Communist. Yannikos was embittered after having been squeezed out of the profitable *Ethnos* venture in 1981 by his publishing partner, George Bobolas. The documents showed that in 1978 the two men signed contracts with the Soviet copyright office in Moscow for permission to publish a Greek-language edition of the 34-volume *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia*. Yannikos says that the profits from this deal were then used to start *Ethnos*. The newspaper was produced by the same staff that worked on the encyclopedia, and works out of the same building. What really irked Yannikos was that the Russians preferred Bobolas, a wealthy right-wing Greek, to him, a lifelong dedicated Communist. (Bobolas, in fact, was the only Greek journalist to receive an award from the notorious right-wing colonels who ruled the country from 1967 to 1973.)

When Yannikos was ousted from the venture, he sued Bobolas. He also talked to Anastasi. After Anastasi's book was published, *Ethnos* sued Anastasi. But Yannikos suddenly settled out of court with Bobolas for $650,000 and declined to testify on Anastasi's behalf.

Without his chief witness, Anastasi was convicted of defamation. The court did not dispute that the Soviet officials with whom the *Ethnos* executives signed commercial and publishing agreements were KGB agents. But it could not be proved that the *Ethnos* editor and publisher knew this, as Anastasi had contended. On appeal his sentence was reduced from two years' imprisonment to one, and then was commuted to a fine. Anastasi, though, was not acquitted. Nor has he retracted his charges. "What is missing here is a contract spelling it all out with the KGB—which of course never existed and never could exist," says Anastasi. "But any court can put two and two together."

BUT THIS WAS only the beginning. In July 1983 *Ethnos* published a transcript obtained from an illegal wiretap of a conversation between Anastasi and a lawyer on the *New York Times*'s Athens bureau phone. *Ethnos* editors claimed that the transcript was delivered to the paper anonymously and that three government officials gave permission to publish it. *Ethnos* absurdly portrayed the conversation as a terrorist conspiracy. The government denied it had given its permission, and prosecuted George Bobolas and the editor of *Ethnos* for illegally publishing it. The two men were sentenced last year to five months' imprisonment each (later commuted to fines). However, early in May of this year, a Greek state prosecutor, relying on the testimony of *Ethnos* executives about this conversation, indicted Anastasi for threatening terrorist acts against *Ethnos*. While there are indications the indictment may be dropped, Anastasi has already filed a countersuit against the *Ethnos* executives for defamation and perjury.

There is yet another lawsuit in the *Ethnos* mess, and it is the one that may blow the whole affair wide open. This is *Ethnos*'s pending suit against the *Economist* in Britain, which was recently postponed until the fall at *Ethnos*'s request. More than a year before Anastasi came out with his book, the *Economist* published its own charges of Soviet links to *Ethnos* in its "Foreign Report" newsletter. Naturally, the drama—or farce—would not be complete without the requisite countersuit; the *Economist* is suing *Ethnos* for the latter's claim that the former is a CIA front.

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The overriding importance of the pending suits in Britain is that they bring the focus back to the core question: what was the KGB's role in *Ethnos*? The *Economist* refuses to comment on the case, except to say that it intends to claim truth as a defense by proving in court that *Ethnos* was started up by the KGB and was a mouthpiece for Soviet policy. If successful, it will be the first time a case of Soviet disinformation has been documented in a Western court of law.

Exactly how the *Economist* will defend itself is a secret. But there are some reasonable guesses. For one thing, it will doubtless make use of all the statements and testimony from *Ethnos* already in the public domain, much of it conflicting. For another, if it is going to prove KGB involvement, the best way would be to get some KGB testimony, i.e., from KGB defectors. They might include Ilya Dzhirkvelov, a former KGB official who appears in a just-released Canadian documentary on disinformation. (With a black mask over his head, Dzhirkvelov discusses the establishment of "independent" papers in Europe congenial to the Soviet line.) Then, too, since last summer, Athens alone has seen the defection of two top KGB men, Sergei Bokhane and Viktor Gudarev, both of whom doubtless could shed light on the case if they could be convinced to testify.

With all this against them, why did *Ethnos* sue the *Economist* in the first place? The answer is that they really didn't want to. When the "Foreign Report" first published the charges, no one paid any attention until a Greek conservative paper, *Messimvrini*, reprinted them under a banner headline. *Ethnos* went after *Messimvrini*, which pointed to the *Economist*; to show it was serious *Ethnos* really had to sue.

As for the *Economist* suit against *Ethnos* for calling it a CIA front, that appears to be a walkover. The *Ethnos* charges were based on an interview with ex-CIA agent Philip Agee, who has built a career around criticizing his former employer. When the interview appeared, a left-wing Greek journal called Agee to verify the story. Agee, who had taped the interview, said the newspaper had distorted his views. He denounced *Ethnos* and demanded a correction.

ALL THESE legal roads lead back to Athens. If the *Economist* successfully defends itself in Britain, then Anastasi is in a position to appeal his conviction on the basis of new evidence. If, by contrast, Anastasi goes on trial for threatening terrorism and is convicted, then when the *Ethnos* editor and publisher come up for appeal sometime at the end of next year on their conviction, they can defend the publication of the Anastasi conversation as a public service against a man convicted of threatening terrorism. One thing is obvious in all these legal snares: someone is lying.

Even more than *Ethnos*, the Papandreou government will be greatly embarrassed if the British courts establish that the KGB did establish a mass-circulation newspaper in a NATO country. Papandreou's spokesman during the Anastasi affair was a former editor of *Ethnos*, and his current minister of the merchant marine (and former minister of justice) was formerly a lawyer for *Ethnos*. With his economy collapsing around him and even his European partners questioning his ties with countries such as Syria and Libya, Papandreou may find all the lawsuits over *Ethnos* threatening the survival of his government.

WILLIAM MCGURN

William McGurn is editorial features editor of the *Wall Street Journal Europe.*

Politics, Waxman-Berman style.

THE LAST MACHINE

Los Angeles

Home turf of the most powerful Democratic machine in the country—a liberal machine, at that—is the Beverly Wilshire Hotel, at the foot of Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, California. One Thursday evening in mid-May, the machine held a glitzy gathering in the hotel's main ballroom to honor one of its ambitious young capos, California assemblyman Burt Margolin. The rich and famous came, or called, from Beverly Hills, Santa Monica, Sacramento, Orange County, even Washington. Three congressmen performed humorously on stage. Jane Fonda telephoned her best wishes. Her husband, state assemblyman Tom Hayden, wandered about the ballroom with a petition against toxic waste. Margolin, touted as the Woody Allen of California politics, told some surprisingly funny jokes. About $125,000 was raised.

This was not a social event, but the Waxman-Berman machine at work. It is a political machine built on three foundations: a local power base in west Los Angeles, liberal politics, and money. The local base, painstakingly nurtured over nearly two decades by U.S. Representatives Henry Waxman, 46, and Howard Berman, 45, is now unassailable. It is also growing. Their liberalism—the old-fashioned New Deal kind, unfazed by the Reagan era—is all but unshakable. And money keeps pouring in from the well-heeled, heavily Jewish electorate in the middle-to-upper-class bagel boroughs.

Without liberal Jewish money, much of it from honchos in the entertainment industry, there would be no machine. Prodigious amounts are raised, then spread about other Democratic campaigns. Through its control of reapportionment, Waxman-Berman has created safe districts for, well, Waxman and Berman, and, indeed, for most Democratic incumbents in the state. This frees Waxman, Berman, and allies to share their bounty with others, which, in turn, enhances their power. Waxman, as an obscure two-term congressman in 1978, dispatched $24,000 in campaign contributions to nine members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. In early 1979 eight of them backed his rash but successful bid to take over the health subcommittee by ousting the chairman. The machine also points

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its followers to liberal Democrats outside California who need money. The night after the Beverly Wilshire dinner, Berman invited Democratic Representative Harry Reid of Nevada to town, and collected $70,000 for Reid's Senate campaign.

What's unique about the Waxman-Berman machine isn't the money spigot, it's the ideology. For political machines, issues are ordinarily an obstacle. Waxman-Berman is different. It exists to push liberal causes and promote support for Israel. Waxman and Berman, both UCLA graduates, were presidents of California Young Democrats in the 1960s and strongly antiwar. In Congress they favor spending programs for the poor and vigorous protection of the environment. Waxman has led the fight against President Reagan's effort to cut health care expenditures. Berman worked against the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration bill, which was opposed by Hispanics allied with the machine. Representative Mel Levine, a Waxman-Berman stalwart, sponsored the House resolution against the sale of missiles to Saudi Arabia.

Waxman and Berman unashamedly crave political power. "A lot of people distrust the idea of power," says Waxman. "But power is neutral. It depends on what you do with it. You can use it to bring about societal objectives. Liberals have a real uneasy feeling about it. I don't have any hesitation. I don't like to give a speech and then lose when the vote comes." That's why the machine plants money in the congressional campaigns of liberal allies around the country. Besides, Waxman may want their support if he seeks a bigger job in the House—like Tip O'Neill's, maybe. That's not imminent. Waxman isn't even on the leadership ladder, and though he considered running for Democratic whip this year, he's passing up the race.

Is Waxman-Berman really a machine? Waxman doesn't like the word. "It connotes patronage and often corruption, and is identified with reactionary political points of view," he complains. "What we have is a very loose network of people with shared values." Levine calls it a coalition. Hope Warschaw, a Waxman-Berman lieutenant and a member of the Democratic National Committee, uses the euphemism "alliance." Well, it's a lot more than that.

FOR ONE THING, there's the strong base in west Los Angeles. A local base is essential to any machine, as is a thirst for aggrandizement. True, Waxman-Berman doesn't have patronage to dispense. It can't fix a parking ticket, or fill city jobs with loyalists. And there's no graft. But it can anoint candidates in west LA and practically guarantee their election. In 1977 it eagerly backed Levine, a link to many untapped contributors in the wealthy Beverly Hills Jewish community. Levine won. In 1982 Waxman's administrative aide in Washington, Burt Margolin, returned to west LA to seek an Assembly seat. "I've lived in this area since 1951, and I'd don't think I'd ever seen Margolin here," says Joseph Cerrell, a respected political consultant. Margolin won handily.

Cerrell says Waxman-Berman "envelops" successful candidates who aren't allies and makes them part of the machine. This happened with Zev Yaroslavsky, who's not quite as fervent a liberal as Waxman and Berman. Yaroslavsky defeated the Waxman-Berman candidate for a Los Angeles City Council seat in 1975. Soon he and the machine were chummy. Now he's the Waxman-Berman candidate for mayor, whenever Tom Bradley, who's running for governor this year, steps down. Naturally, Yaroslavsky made an appearance at the Margolin dinner. More recently, Gray Davis, chief of staff when Jerry Brown was governor, has been co-opted by Waxman-Berman. Davis sought the machine's endorsement for an Assembly seat in 1982, but another Waxman-Berman ally was already running. Davis refused to switch to another race. The machine eventually ran its candidate for another office, and Davis won. But in the long run, Waxman-Berman prevailed. This year, Davis is running for state controller with full machine backing. He easily won the primary June 3. Davis, too, attended the Margolin gathering.

THE MOST REMARKABLE outreach effort by Waxman-Berman came during reapportionment in 1981 and 1982. Reapportionment is critical in California, with its burgeoning population. In 1971 Waxman, then a state legislator, was in charge, and he assigned Michael Berman, Howard's younger brother, to draw up a new scheme. He did, but it was tilted so heavily to Democrats that Governor Ronald Reagan vetoed the plan. In 1981 Berman was commissioned again. He created a congressional district along the Pacific Coast (Santa Monica, Malibu) for Levine, took a batch of liberals out of maverick Democrat Tony Beilenson's district and used them to make Howard Berman's district solidly Democratic, and produced a host of other safe seats, two of them Hispanic. A longtime ally, Marty Martinez, was given the machine's blessing in one. Another prominent Hispanic, Estaban Torres, had to be cajoled into running in the adjacent district. "We didn't want to see the Hispanic community split its vote in the primary so an Anglo would win," says Waxman. After reapportionment California Democrats picked up six new congressional seats.

Missing from Waxman-Berman is one usual feature of political machines, the boss. There's no Richard Daley or Frank Skeffington. Waxman is the senior figure, but key decisions, such as whether to back Davis in the 1982 Assembly race, are made collectively—Waxman, the two Bermans, Michael Berman's consulting business partner Carl D'Agostino, a few others. But Waxman-Berman has plenty of another machine staple, loyalty. In the Maryland Senate primary this year, Waxman's PAC has sent money to Representative Barbara Mikulski, who voted for Waxman for subcommittee chairman back in 1979. In the California primary in an Orange County congressional district, the machine not only gave money to Assemblyman Richard Robinson but sent Hope Warschaw to run his campaign. The machine was paying off a debt to Robinson, who had supported Berman's bid for Assembly speaker years before. Robinson got 67 percent of the vote in the

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primary and has an outside chance of defeating Republican incumbent Robert Dornan.

Oh, yes. There's one other thing that Waxman-Berman has: enemies—maybe more enemies than friends. New enemies have been acquired at every stage in the machine's growth. The Waxman-Berman crowd is impatient and a bit ruthless. They never wait for an office to be handed to them. They step in to claim it, often from an incumbent. "Risking a few enemies" is not too high a price to pay for "sustaining our position on an issue," says Berman. Waxman risked a few when he defeated an aging Democratic assemblyman in 1968, and again in 1979 when he supplanted Representative Richardson Preyer of North Carolina as chairman of the health subcommittee.

Even more brazen was Berman's attempt to become speaker of the California Assembly. After the governor, the speaker is the most important politician in the state, drawing media attention and dispensing patronage. One day in 1979 Howard Berman, then a state legislator, marched into the office of Speaker Leo McCarthy and demanded that he step down. McCarthy refused, and the fight was on. Michael Berman moved to Sacramento for the duration, and Waxman returned frequently from Washington to help. Berman's case was simple. He said McCarthy was more interested in raising money for a 1982 governor's race than for Democratic Assembly members in 1980. As a result, Republicans might capture the Assembly and thus control reapportionment. Berman's argument carried the day. The Democratic caucus voted 26 to 24 against McCarthy, who then backed out of the race. But when the matter got to the floor, Assemblyman Willie Brown picked off several Berman backers and also got Republican support to win. Berman had to settle for a seat in Congress. He left behind a host of enemies.

IN CONGRESS, he made a few new ones. Berman decided he wanted a seat on the steering and policy committee, the Democratic leadership panel. The problem was, Majority Leader Jim Wright had his own candidate. After a bruising fight, Berman won. He and Waxman also have a rivalry with Tony Coelho, a California Democrat on the fast track to a top leadership post. Berman says he and Coelho are "personally friendly and politically rocky." Coelho not only competes for power among California Democrats, but—to the chagrin of Waxman-Berman—he is the favorite for Democratic whip next year.

A final source of enemies for Waxman-Berman is Michael Berman. He is perhaps the brightest and certainly the most unpretentious political consultant in the country. When he saw Richard Gere playing a consultant in the movie *Power*, Berman says, "It was like looking in a mirror." That's a joke. Berman wears polyester clothes, drives a drab four-door Chevy sedan, and works in a cluttered office near a 7-Eleven. But he and D'Agostino have perfected "micro-targeting" of direct mail. If you have an Italian surname, you get one piece of literature. If you put "Ms." on your voter registration, you get a different piece than if you put "Mrs." They can also play rough. Their mailings often look like official party documents. Candidates have won in the primary after refusing to pay for a spot on mailings. But their chances are far better if they're on the slate.

Where does Waxman-Berman go from here? In Los Angeles, the Waxman-Berman base is secure, and Yaroslavsky may be mayor some day, though Berman sighed recently that "sometimes you wonder if we'll ever have a mayor other than Tom Bradley." In Sacramento, the machine is still having problems. It was supposedly DOA when Berman ignominiously lost the speaker's fight. The death report was premature. But Waxman-Berman failed to field a gubernatorial candidate this year when the fortunately named state senator Gary Hart of Santa Barbara backed out of running against Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley, who is at odds with Waxman-Berman on numerous issues.

In Washington, though, the machine has established a successful beachhead. Waxman is the most effective liberal in Congress. As subcommittee chairman, he dedicated himself in the early 1980s to preserving the Clean Air Act. Committee chairman John Dingell of Michigan, a friend of the auto industry, wanted to gut the act. Waxman, as the *Washington Monthly* puts it, is "short, bald, and, at first glance, something of schlemiel." He is, to be exact, five-foot-five inches, which makes him a lot smaller than the physically imposing Dingell, who is six-foot-three, mean, and overbearing. On the Clean Air Act, they went eyeball-to-navel. Waxman coolly recruited enough votes to quash Dingell's effort.

FRED BARNES

Pinochet looks to the 21st century.

MARCOS, HE AIN'T

Santiago

Over the last two months, in response to one of the largest outbursts of civil unrest since a state of siege was lifted in mid-1985, General Augusto Pinochet has turned the Chilean army loose on the civilian population of his own capital city. Their faces menacingly streaked with black jungle camouflage paint, the paratroopers have joined police and internal security agents on over 30 predawn sweeps through Santiago's low-income neighborhoods. The cops and the *carapintadas*, as the painted paratroopers are known, have hauled in relatively few of the left-wing terrorism suspects they were supposedly seeking. But they have ransacked homes and rounded up over 17,500 men. The detainees were taken for interrogation to soccer stadiums and public parks. The *carapintadas* also made two assaults on the city's fancy downtown boulevards, firing their automatic weapons into the air to help police prevent protest marches. During their second attack, on May 20, they shot and killed a 20-year-old student. The mess

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from Pinochet to his opponents was clear: this is war.

Given recent events in the Philippines and Haiti, it's tempting to speculate that Pinochet's latest campaign of violent intimidation is a sign of desperation, and that another Third World authoritarian is about to be forced out by his own people. But that would be premature. There are in fact several reasons to be pessimistic about the chances for a prompt, peaceful return to democracy in Chile. Pinochet *must* crack down because his rule is increasingly unpopular. He *can* crack down because he still enjoys the undivided support of the army, by far the most powerful branch of Chile's armed forces, and because his moderate civilian opponents are in chronic disarray. Above all, he *wants* to crack down, because it helps to polarize Chilean politics into a contest between him and the Communist Party, a contest that Pinochet believes, correctly, he can win.

The Chilean regime is stronger than either the Duvaliers' tropical dynasty or Ferdinand Marcos's crony capitalism because it is based both on the will of a wily, determined individual and on the power of military institutions that, although repressive, have largely resisted the rot of financial corruption. Pinochet, now 70, clings to power for reasons that are as much ideological as personal. As his spokesmen tirelessly point out, Pinochet believes he has carried out a revolution that rescued Chile from communism by doing away with the flimsy, talking-shop parliamentary democracy that let the Communists gain a foothold in the first place. He is not about to let democrats roll back this "triumph."

Meanwhile, behind the dictator stands the 50,000-man army—a highly disciplined and professional fighting force whose Prussian traditions require absolute obedience to the commander in chief. In Chile, more army officers have a direct role in the running of society than did officers in the now-deposed Argentine and Brazilian military regimes. According to figures compiled by political scientist Carlos Huneeus of Santiago's Catholic University, almost twice as many Chilean officers have held Cabinet positions as Argentines or Brazilians. As of late 1983, all 50 regional governors in Chile were military officers, two-thirds of them from the army.

NOT SURPRISINGLY, Pinochet has brushed aside the moderate opposition's most recent attempts at negotiation. Last August, 11 political parties ranging from the right-wing National Party to the largest faction of the Socialist Party were brought together by the archbishop of Santiago, Cardinal Juan Francisco Fresno, to sign a National Accord for a Transition to Full Democracy. The document asked for constitutional reform and free elections. In return it promised not to pursue Argentine-style human rights trials after the transition. Pinochet rejected the accord.

Pinochet prefers his own 1980 constitution, which was approved by the voters in a controversial plebiscite and will be almost impossible to amend once it goes into full effect in 1989. It states that the four-man military junta that now serves as Chile's legislature will nominate a presidential candidate in late 1988. Then the nominee, presumably Pinochet, will be submitted to the voters for a "yes or no" vote in early 1989. If approved in the plebiscite, Pinochet would be eligible for reelection to a second eight-year term in 1997. Pinochet's plan, in other words, is to remain in power from now until the year 2005—when he will be 89 years old. If the junta candidate is voted down, the constitution calls for a free, open election in 1990—though no one is betting now that Pinochet would ever let things go that far.

THERE IS ONE new hope for Chile's opposition: lately Pinochet has had problems keeping the junta in line. Air force commander in chief Fernando Matthei and navy commander in chief José Toribio Merino are said to be uneasy with the idea of Pinochet's extended rule. Last fall Matthei went so far as to speak favorably about the National Accord. More recently the junta reportedly vetoed Pinochet's request to declare a state of siege in May—only token contingents of air force and navy men joined army troops in the streets. The other branches are said to be worried about a transition that leaves Pinochet—and the army—in control of the government while they go back to their barracks. They are also getting queasy about the way the army and army-backed internal security agencies carry out the dictator's dirty work. "The navy and the air force are not willing to have their institutions hurt by the blood of all these crimes," says Edgardo Boeninger, a leading intellectual who served as a senior official in Chile's last Christian Democratic regime.

But how to capitalize on the squabble? Except for those on the opposition's right wing, civilian politicians—worried about being outflanked on the left—are still obliged to advocate street demonstrations. A new civilian assembly, made up of 18 unions, professional organizations, and student groups, has made June a "month of civil disobedience" (over 1,500 protesters have been arrested so far), and has announced a national "work stoppage" for early July. The idea is to persuade waverers on the junta to boot their boss in 1988 or, better, make them agree to elections sooner. Such a Manila-style "people power" strategy, designed to deal Pinochet a political defeat, is most strongly favored by left-wing parties within the National Accord. "Dictators always end up in a bunker," argues Ricardo Lagos, a leader of the Socialist Party. "Do you know any who left on their own?"

Privately, however, some more moderate leaders acknowledge that almost all previous efforts at mass shows of strength by the non-Communist opposition have turned instead into easily repressed displays of weakness. The main reason: aside from hard-core militants, many of whom are Communists, not enough of the general public is willing to participate. Opposition leaders themselves deserve much of the blame for the apathy. The parties sometimes seem to take as many potshots at one another as at Pinochet. The conservatives lambast the Christian Democrats for allegedly discussing a coalition with the Communists; the Socialists twit the right for trying to negotiate on

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its own with Pinochet. What's more, in the absence of elections, all the parties appear to carry the same political weight. The Christian Democrats, Chile's biggest party, must deal on an equal footing with tiny ones. The artificial prominence of splinter groups muddles the political picture and leaves the public bewildered. In a recent poll by the respected Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences in Santiago, 53 percent of the respondents said they felt either "boredom," "indifference," or "antagonism" toward politics. "The gap between the politicians and the public is huge," says Andres Allamand, who heads the center-right National Union Party.

Nor is the economy the explosive factor it was in 1983, when the collapse of a cheap import boom led to widespread protests and, ultimately, to the declaration by the government of a state of siege. Although Chile still seems consigned for the foreseeable future to double-digit unemployment and to making payments on its $20 billion foreign debt, economists are forecasting growth this year, thanks to falling world interest rates and oil prices. A leading Christian Democrat explains, "Things are so bad that people don't want to risk their jobs by taking to the streets. Yet the economy isn't bad enough to make people so desperate they don't mind the risks."

SOME OPPOSITION figures appear to be facing the fact that 1989 is only about two-and-a-half years away, and that the prospects for defeating the regime politically through mass mobilization are slim. A new, "realistic" strategy is being talked about for achieving a free election in 1989. This would mean tacitly accepting the 1980 constitution, while asking for modifications—such as legalizing the political parties and establishing a voter registry—that would help make open elections possible, or, failing that, help the opposition organize to defeat a Pinochet candidacy in 1989 and win a (putative) free election in 1990. To optimists, such a posture, backed by "just the right amount and right style" of public pressure and pushes from Chile's powerful Catholic Church and the United States, might persuade the junta both that dumping Pinochet is in their interest and that Chile will not fall into Communist hands after they go. "It's an outcome in which the military is not politically defeated," says Edgardo Boeninger, "in which they exit with dignity and consensus and with their fears reduced."

The center-right's willingness to consider such a strategy has resulted in a concession or two, including the regime's recent decision to let a moderate opposition group start up a daily newspaper in March 1987. But the problem is that as long as Pinochet maintains the monolithic support of the army, he still has plenty of incentive to keep taking a hard line. Despite the grumbling of the navy and air force, it is far from clear that they would have the strength to stand up to Pinochet in 1988. A number of well-informed Chileans think that when Pinochet gets the junta together in a room, he might simply bully them into nominating him. Any level of public pressure risks reinforcing the junta's siege mentality, making them less flexible. The same may go for pressure from the United States. Meanwhile, the "realist" strategy itself risks splitting the opposition along the fault line that runs between its left wing and its center, possibly driving the Socialists back to their Allende-era coalition with the Communists. That would be a major blow to Chile's potential political stability, because the Socialists, by signing the National Accord and renouncing their Marxist past, had apparently begun to fill the historic social democratic void in Chilean politics. "But at some moment," says a centrist politician who favors the "realist" option, "the Christian Democrats will have to say, 'Here I go, who's with me?' "

THUS, MUCH of Pinochet's real power now rests in his ability to polarize the political situation. Such a strategy reinforces the growing prestige of the Communists, who have been saying all along that any attempt to deal with the regime is pointless. This tends to drive older democrats into political irrelevance, and younger ones into unholy political alliances. As 1989 approaches, the best argument Pinochet could use both on the public and on the members of the junta would be that it's either him or the Communists.

Hence there is an odd convergence of interests between Pinochet and the Communists: neither wants to see moderates take power peacefully. Pinochet not only failed to eliminate the Communist threat from Chile; the brutality and economic ineptitude of his regime have helped make the Communists as strong as, or stronger than, they were in Allende's time—especially among unemployed youth in Santiago's slums and on university campuses, where they have begun to work together with young Christian Democrats. Since 1980, when they declared their intention to use "all forms" of struggle against Pinochet, the Communists have also been backing the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (MRPF) urban guerrilla organization. According to the State Department, the MRPF carried out over 1,000 bombing attacks last year. The democrats' nightmare scenario isn't that the Communists could win a full-blown guerrilla war, but that the military might submit Chile to an Argentine-style "dirty war" in order to get rid of them.

That is a future that only Pinochet and the Communists may view with anything like anticipation. But with the dictator holding firm and democratic politicians boxed in by their own mistakes and internal differences, Chile looks distressingly like drifting that way. Indeed, on May 20 Chileans may have gotten a preview of things to come. All afternoon the police and the *carapintadas* chased clusters of protesters around Santiago's downtown, the cops filling the air with tear gas until everyone from shopkeepers to office clerks had fled the area. In the eerie emptiness that followed, all you could see were the soldiers, stalking from street corner to street corner—until the guerrillas bombed the electric power lines and plunged the city into darkness.

CHARLES LANE

Charles Lane spent the last year reporting from South America for the *Christian Science Monitor.*

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The only way to break the culture of poverty.

THE WORK ETHIC STATE

BY MICKEY KAUS

"THE MOST important analytic point . . . is the fact that poverty in America forms a culture, a way of life and feeling, that makes it a whole."

Who said that? Here's a hint—he wrote in the early '60s. Here's another: he dramatically portrayed the breakdown of family life in the black ghetto, the tendency of young men to move from one woman to another without forming marital bonds, and the disastrous rise in the number of families headed by women. This new culture, he said, was different from the culture of other poor ethnic immigrants—more isolated, more dispiriting, more self-perpetuating.

Give up? Did you guess Daniel Patrick Moynihan, author of a famous government report on this topic in 1965? Well, you're wrong. If you guessed Kenneth Clark, the black sociologist whose book *Dark Ghetto* anticipated much of Moynihan's report—you're also wrong. Those are both good guesses. But the quote is from the socialist Michael Harrington—from his 1962 book, *The Other America*, generally credited with prodding a Democratic administration into launching the War on Poverty.

Today it's Ronald Reagan who warns of "a permanent culture of poverty . . . a second and separate America." Reagan conservatives blame the growth of this underclass on the antipoverty war Harrington started. The mere existence of this underclass is considered a refutation of liberalism, and many liberals seem to react as if that were true. But as Harrington's quote shows, we really haven't come very far since 1962, when the War on Poverty hadn't even begun.

In the intervening years much of America's policy establishment fled from the underclass problem. Black leaders, caught up in the enterprise of building ethnic pride ("black is beautiful") and worried in part that an unflattering description of ghetto life would reflect on all blacks, reacted against Moynihan's report, enforcing an etiquette of silence on the subject. Liberal whites, frustrated by the failure of the "hand-up-not-handout" programs of the early Great Society, nevertheless were reluctant to "blame the victim." Instead, they gravitated toward a bland redistributionism which held that if the poor couldn't or wouldn't earn their way out of poverty, the government should simply give them cash in the form of a guaranteed income.

Now we're back at the beginning. The government is not about to try to end poverty by simply mailing out checks. More important, there is justified doubt that cash in itself can end the pathology. No one who has watched Bill Moyers's "CBS Reports" on the black family's decline, or read Leon Dash's series on black teenage pregnancy in the *Washington Post*, or Nicholas Lemann's recent *Atlantic* articles on "The Origins of the Underclass," or Ken Auletta's book on the same subject, can doubt that there is a culture of poverty out there that has taken on a life of its own. Right and left now recognize that neither robust economic growth nor massive government transfer payments can by themselves transform a "community" where 90 percent of the children are born into fatherless families, where over 60 percent of the population is on welfare, where the work ethic has evaporated and the entrepreneurial drive is channeled into gangs and drug-pushing. In the District of Columbia ghetto, "getting paid" is slang for mugging somebody.

The underclass embraces only a minority of the poor. It doesn't even include most who go on welfare. (A majority get off the welfare rolls within two years.) On the other hand, about 10 to 15 percent of single mothers who go on welfare stay there for eight years or more, and they account for about half the money spent on welfare at any one time, according to a study by David Ellwood and Mary Jo Bane of Harvard. These people, who are poor on a more or less permanent basis, are part of who we're talking about.

Is the underclass black? Certainly it does not include most blacks, two-thirds of whom live above the poverty line. And it has become fashionable for conservatives to downplay the significance of race in the poverty culture, the better to lay the blame squarely on liberal welfare programs. "The focus on blacks cripples progress," writes Charles Murray, author of *Losing Ground* and the most prominent neocon underclass theorist. Murray claims to have found a town in Ohio where white mothers are producing illegitimate babies at Moynihan-report levels (25 percent of all births), presumably encouraged by the same welfare system that ensnares blacks.

But it is simply stupid to pretend that the culture of poverty isn't largely a black culture. Lemann's recent *Atlantic* essay effectively debunks the idea that we can treat the underclass as a color-blind phenomenon. Lemann stresses a fairly direct connection between those blacks who worked in the sharecropping system in the South and those who formed the lower class of the ghettoes after the great migration North. When desegregation allowed middle- and upper-class blacks to escape the ghetto, Lemann argues, they left behind the black lower class that had always been there. Only now that isolated lower-class culture was free from the restraints the black middle class had quite self-consciously imposed on it.

A large ongoing survey at the University of Michigan

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shows that although blacks compose only 12 percent of the population, they make up 62 percent of those who stay poor for a long time and 58 percent of the "latent poor"—that is, those who would be poor but for welfare. In this respect the old stereotype that most of the poor are black is accurate. The statistics are equally striking on the question of family breakup. Black illegitimacy rates have always been many times higher than white rates. Then, starting around 1965, the black rate rose dramatically from its already high Moynihan-report level of 25 percent to close to 60 percent today. White illegitimacy rates have been rising too, but the white rate is still only about 13 percent. That Murray could find one poor town where the white rate reaches less than half the average rate for *all* blacks only proves how vast the gap is. Even if whites were a majority of the long-term poor, it would be hard for them to create a poverty "culture" because poor whites have never been confined to segregated communities.

So yes, the problem I am talking about is the culture of our largely black, largely urban ghettos. It is only part of the broader problem of poverty, although it is the most intractable part. It is only part of the problem facing black Americans, although all blacks are unfairly stigmatized by the behavior of the underclass minority. Today, when most liberal black leaders are finally speaking frankly about the crisis in the ghettoes, the important question is no longer whether there is a culture of poverty, but what we are going to do to change it.

'Only Black People Can Do This'

ONE POSSIBLE solution is "self-help," which means efforts by the black middle and upper classes to perform what William Raspberry calls "an unprecedented and enormously difficult salvage operation" in the ghetto. This strategy accords with both the hesitancy of liberal whites to tell blacks how to behave and the interest of bootstrapping black neocons in shifting the focus away from a "civil rights" strategy that relies on government intervention. "Only blacks can effectively provide moral leadership for their people," says Glenn Loury of Harvard, a prime spokesman for self-help. More successful blacks, especially, "are strategically situated to undertake" this task. Even Loury's liberal black critics, such as Roger Wilkins, accept both the need for changing underclass culture and the assumption that "only black people can do this." Let-Blacks-Do-It is the new left-right consensus.

When you get to just how the black community itself is going to accomplish a "massive cultural turnaround," however, things get vague. Loury talks about "discussion of values" and "building constructive, internal institutions." Wilkins admits he has only "the sketchiest of ideas." The "local Urban League," he says, could "assemble a roster of role models and present them as a package of assembly speakers for inner-city schools."

Good luck to such efforts, but let's be realistic: today's underclass infants will be great-great-grandparents before these well-intentioned and pathetically limited schemes accomplish any "massive cultural turnaround." The "luckier blacks" can't do it themselves. I'm not even sure it's *fair* to expect middle-class blacks to bear the load of reshaping the underclass simply because they share the same skin color.

Nor is it clear that all the black talk of "self-help"—tinged as it often is with an element of separatism—will push in the right direction. Blacks are more likely to make it by integrating with mainstream economic culture than by selling each other toothpaste. But self-helpers from Louis Farrakhan to Republican heroes such as conservative community activist Robert Woodson seem to be promoting inherently limited bootstrapping operations that restrict the arena for black enterprise to the nation's poorest community.

Above all, the Let-Blacks-Do-It boom tempts nonblacks to avoid thinking with any urgency about solutions to the problem that everyone is so proud to have reacknowledged. The biggest disappointment was Moynihan's recent book *Family and Nation*, an effort long on elegantly posed questions and short on answers. Moynihan was once a bold social reformer, but here he was talking about the "limits of government." Likewise, former Virginia governor Charles Robb recently attracted a lot of attention with a speech referring to "self-defeating patterns of [black] behavior." The *New York Times* praised Robb's willingness to face up to "hard truths." But when it came to hard solutions, Robb's most concrete suggestion was that "young mothers, as a condition of receiving welfare," be required to let "visiting teachers come to their homes periodically, to teach learning games and encourage language development. . . ." Learning games!

The alternative is to search for the sort of sweeping government effort that has helped solve our other problems—not new civil rights laws, but efforts that might have the same beneficial effect as the early civil rights laws. As Moynihan says, in the best two sentences in his book, "The central conservative truth is that it is culture, not politics, that determines the success of a society. The central liberal truth is that politics can change a culture and save it from itself."

The Umbilical Cord Theory

THAT BRINGS US to the subject of welfare reform. If you are looking for a political handle on the culture of poverty, there is none bigger. Welfare reform is a hot topic in Washington these days, next on the National Agenda once tax reform is out of the way. Task forces are springing up all over the place. Reagan has commissioned three. Mario Cuomo has one. Bruce Babbitt has one designed to keep Reagan's honest from the left, while Michael Novak chairs one to horn in from the right. The mood is early War on Poverty, but in Reagan's Washington the eager young antipoverty warriors are carrying copies of *Losing Ground* rather than *The Other America*. They are going to break the culture of poverty by replacing the Great Society with a "conservative vision of the welfare state."

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What's wrong with the current welfare state, anyway? The basic features of our current system for the poor are these: Fairly generous benefits are available to those who are deemed totally and permanently disabled. Very little in the way of benefits (mainly Food Stamps and stingy state "general relief" money) is available to able-bodied men and women, single or married. But if you are a single parent (almost always a mother) responsible for taking care of a child, you qualify for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), which is what most people mean by welfare. In California and New York the AFDC benefit, combined with other benefits, is high enough to bring a welfare mother close to the poverty line. In most Southern states the AFDC benefit is much lower.

THE CENTRAL dilemma of our welfare state, then, is not the age-old general tension between "compassion" and "dependency." For most of the able-bodied, Americans have decided against much cash compassion. Ours is a more specific and modern dilemma: what about a single able-bodied woman who must also care for a child? If we give her no more aid than we give able-bodied men, we may be punishing the child. But to aid the child, we must aid the mother, as AFDC does—and then we risk the "social hazard" of encouraging women to put themselves in that disastrous position. To women, the AFDC system seems to say, "Have a kid and the state will take care of you—as long as you don't live with the father." To men, it says, "Father children and the state will take care of them."

This can't *help*. But the current attack on welfare by conservatives mixes up two quite distinct theories as to how it might hurt. In theory #1, prospective mothers and fathers are influenced directly by the economic blandishments of AFDC, much as if by bribes. A mother might have a baby "to go on welfare." A father might leave his wife or girlfriend so she qualifies for the program. Believers in this theory are apt to say that welfare *caused* the growth of the underclass. This is the theory behind Charles Murray's notorious "Harold and Phyllis" story, which compares in minute detail the financial prospects of a fictitious ghetto couple on and off welfare, concluding that between 1960 and 1970 benefit increases and eased eligibility rules had tipped the balance and made welfare an appealing option.

As "absent father" cases grew from 30 percent of AFDC homes in 1940 to 64 percent in 1960, even many liberals were quite willing to denounce AFDC's "discrimination" against intact families. The preferred liberal solution, however, was not to take benefits away from broken families but to extend them to intact ones. The guaranteed-income concept was the logical conclusion of this line of thought.

But once the guaranteed income was politically dead, liberals took off after the Bribe Theory. And it turns out the theory doesn't hold up very well. For one thing, as Lemann points out, the Bribe Theory doesn't account for black exceptionalism. Welfare certainly couldn't have caused the black family patterns that W. E. B. DuBois noted in Philadelphia in 1899, 35 years before welfare existed. For another, the impact of marginal Harold-and-Phyllis style calculations on the decision of women to have a child out of wedlock does not appear to be great. The illegitimacy problem got worse in the mid- to late 1970s, even though AFDC benefits were falling in real dollars. And, in a much-cited study, Ellwood and Bane compared family structures in states with varying benefit levels and concluded that high benefits have no effect on the decision to have a baby. Ghetto teenagers don't have children to go on welfare, these experts tell us. They have babies to increase their self-esteem, to give themselves "something to love" in a world where delayed gratification seems pointless. Teenage men seek to prove their masculinity, while girls, as Dash's series described in horrifying detail, are often ridiculed *by other girls* if they remain virgins too long into their teens.

But there is a second, and far more plausible, theory that implicates welfare in this cultural catastrophe. It holds that although welfare might not *cause* the underclass, it *sustains* it. With AFDC in place, young girls look around them and recognize, perhaps unconsciously, that girls in their neighborhood who have had babies on their own are surviving, however uncomfortably (but who lives comfortably in the ghetto?). Welfare, as the umbilical cord through which the mainstream society sustains the isolated ghetto society, permits the expansion of this single-parent culture. It is its economic life support system, much as the entertainment deduction is the life support system of the culture of the $45 business lunch. No businessmen goes into an overpriced restaurant *in order* to run up a big deduction. But without the deduction, businessmen would quickly change their lifestyle and such restaurants would disappear.

The Umbilical Cord Theory doesn't talk of families being directly "pulled apart" by welfare, but of families that are never formed in the culture welfare subsidizes. Once AFDC benefits reach a certain threshold that allows poor single mothers to survive, the culture of the underclass can start growing as women have babies for all the various non-welfare reasons they have them. Indeed, precisely *because* nobody has babies in order to go on welfare, marginally lowering welfare benefits won't affect them.

IF THE Bribe Theory is the basis for Murray's "Harold and Phyllis" example, the Umbilical Cord Theory underlies his equally notorious "thought experiment." What would happen, he asks, if there were no welfare *at all*? Answer: things would have to change. "You want to cut illegitimate births among poor people? . . . I know how to do that," Murray told Ken Auletta in a *Washington Monthly* interview. "You just rip away every kind of government support there is. What happens then? You're going to have lots of parents talking differently to daughters, and you're going to have lots of daughters talking differently to their boyfriends. . . ." If the daughters didn't, their plight trying to raise kids without welfare would serve as an example to their neighbors.

The implications of this second view of welfare are far

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nastier than those of the Bribe version. If the Umbilical Cord Theory is correct, it isn't enough to *extend* welfare benefits so that intact families are well off in comparison to single-parent families. You have to deny benefits to the single-parent families, to unplug the underclass culture's life support system.

Those of us who don't have the stomach to go through with Murray's "experiment" (and Murray himself waffles) are compelled to come up with a more humane way of changing the welfare culture. And there remains the possibility that something less than Murray's "let-them-starve" solution might work—something that doesn't cause pain exactly, but that does impose upon individuals the consequences of their choices, at the same time that it offers them a way out. Something like work.

This is the promise of "workfare," right now the hottest thing in the hot field of welfare reform. Workfare holds out the hope of achieving the ends of Murray's "experiment," without the intolerable toll of human suffering, simply by exposing welfare recipients to the necessity that has been the fate of mankind since Eden: the necessity of labor.

THE SIX PERCENT SOLUTION

IN 1969, when Nixon proposed his ambitious guaranteed income scheme for families with children, his domestic adviser, one Daniel Patrick Moynihan, threw in a token "work requirement" to placate conservatives. This gave William Safire, Nixon's speechwriter, the excuse he needed to label the entire concoction "workfare," thus permanently confusing the meaning of that term. The Nixon plan, in reality, offered the poor money with no strings attached. As such it was the opposite of what most people mean by workfare, and what I mean by workfare, which is what Ronald Reagan meant by workfare when he first proposed in 1967 that welfare recipients in California be required to work, in government public service jobs if necessary, in exchange for their welfare checks.

Workfare drove liberals berserk back then. Thanks in part to liberal opposition, Reagan's California program never really got off the ground. But he persisted, and when he got to Washington in 1981 he proposed requiring all states to make welfare recipients work off their grants at the minimum wage. Congress didn't give him that, but it did allow states to experiment with workfare if they wanted.

The result is one of those bipartisan movements that seems to herald a genuinely productive marriage of liberalism with the more authoritarian wing of conservatism. *Time* magazine reports: "In statehouses across the country, Democrats and Republicans have joined forces to support legislation that combines the job programs traditionally favored by liberals with efforts to pare the welfare rolls advocated by conservatives." Some 28 states have run experiments, most of them small, with one or another variety of workfare. More important, three of the five biggest states in the union— California, New York, and Illinois—all recently announced ambitious plans to apply workfare precepts to their entire caseloads.

The appearance of a new bipartisan toughness can be deceiving, however. Virtually everybody by now agrees that, as Cuomo put it, "work is better than welfare"—that welfare recipients, mothers included, should be in the labor force (something neither liberals nor conservative women's-place-is-at-home types would have agreed on a few years ago). Beyond that, "workfare"—like "industrial policy"—is vague enough to mean quite different things to different people.

ON ONE EXTREME is Massachusetts's touted Employment and Training Choices program, ET for short. But ET is not really workfare at all. There is nothing mandatory about it. True, welfare mothers with no children under six must *register* for the program, but registration for work has been a federal welfare requirement since 1967. (It's "nothing other than filling out a form," says Massachusetts Welfare Commissioner Charles Atkins.) Everything else about ET is voluntary and upbeat. Welfare mothers are offered a variety of services designed to help them find work—job appraisals, career planning workshops, remedial education, job training, placement services. Those who find jobs get transportation allowances and free day care for a year after they start work, plus Medicaid for up to 15 months if their employers don't provide health insurance.

But welfare recipients don't have to do any of this. If they prefer they can still stay home and collect a check. If "clients" decline ET's "invitation" to participate, they are placed on an automated "future participation" list and targeted for "special marketing campaigns." As for mandatory programs—that is to say, workfare—Atkins has a simple answer: "I think workfare is slavery."

ET is the new hope of liberals who don't really like workfare at all. The Democratic National Committee flew Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis down to Washington in March to brag about the program as an example of "Democrats Making It Work." The DNC publicity brochure contrasts Massachusetts's "success story" with Reaganite workfare. "They offer a punitive approach, a negative approach," it says. "They try to club people off welfare." ET offers "ladders of opportunity." "We don't need another study," DNC Chairman Paul Kirk said, ridiculing the Reagan administration's welfare task forces. "Governor Dukakis has been out solving the problem."

Why might ET make a difference where similar programs had failed? First, it seems to have changed the perception that welfare mothers are unemployable. Various studies have shown that, of all "underclass" groups, AFDC mothers are the most capable of making the transition to the world of work. (It's the men who are most often unemployable.) But state employment departments, which are typically responsible for placing the unemployed in jobs, have traditionally told AFDC mothers, "don't call us, we'll call you," worried that if they actually refer them to jobs, employers will be so horrified they will stop asking the

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state for referrals. Atkins signed the Massachusetts Division of Employment Security to an interagency "performance contract" under which it gets paid $1,000 for every welfare case placed in a job. This appears to have broken through the prejudice against AFDC mothers. (It may have helped that the head of the Massachusetts Division of Employment Security is Atkins's wife.)

Second, there are undoubted advantages to ET's all-carrot, Up-With-People approach. "If we went confrontational, they would feel criticized, scared, angry," argues Anne Peretz, director of The Family Center, a clinic that serves welfare recipients living in public housing. (She is also the wife of TNR's editor-in-chief). "If you try to force somebody to do something, they will succeed in not doing it." Peretz says the "excuses" available to those in the welfare culture "are just endless"—sickness, baby-sitter troubles, teenagers who need emergency attention. "You can get everybody up and marching in the right direction, but you will lose the war" unless the behavior is truly self-motivated. Peretz sees no alternative to coaxing and cajoling welfare cases into action by appealing to "that part of themselves" that wants to become self-supporting, a process she likens to "seduction."

ET is the embodiment of this classic social-work approach—dealing one-on-one with each "client," tailoring a plan for each, slowly building up "self-esteem" and "mastery" from within, overcoming the welfare culture through the skilled application of "human services."

UNFORTUNATELY, the grandiose claims made for ET tend to wilt on close inspection. Dukakis boasts that 25,000 recipients have been placed in jobs since October 1983, but one-third of those are only in part-time jobs. And it's only the full-time jobs that pay ET's much-touted "average of over $10,000 per year"—$5 an hour. In ET's first 18 months, half of its full-time job placements paid less than $4.50 an hour. Half of the part-time placements paid less than $3.75. A big ET selling point is that it offers, not minimum-wage slots, but "real jobs with real wages" paying enough to support a family. But even in a state with a 3.3 percent unemployment rate (lowest in the nation), many ET graduates must content themselves with work not far above the $3.35 minimum wage. A year after they leave the program, about half of ET's success stories still aren't earning enough to go off welfare completely.

The ET hype encourages a fallacy that commonly plagues government training programs: the Gross vs. Net Fallacy. It's one thing to boast about placing 25,000 people in jobs. It's another to say those 25,000 wouldn't have gotten jobs without ET. Reasons for skepticism abound. As pro-ET types stress in other, more convenient, contexts, there is always tremendous movement on and off welfare. As of June 1985, some 31 percent of ET's job placements were listed as "appraisal only"—that is, their contact with ET was limited to an initial counseling session before they got a job (although they may also use ET's free day care and transportation). Surely many of these people would have found work without ET.

Welfare commissioner Atkins will say only that the "vast majority" of the 25,000 jobs are attributable to ET. Even that claim is dubious. Atkins has refused to allow an independent study to compare ET's success with that of a local control group that doesn't get ET. He says, reasonably, that he doesn't want to deny any recipient full access to ET's training. But where such studies have been done they have consistently shown that huge "gross" job placement gains turn out to be slim or non-existent "net" improvements over the placements that would have happened anyway. In San Diego's "work experience" experiment, for example, a gross gain of 61 percent melted into a net gain of less than 6 percent.

The most important criticism of ET, however, is that it doesn't come close to "solving the problem" of the culture of poverty. ET is about as good a voluntary job-training program as we are likely to get. It is competently run, well-funded, skillfully marketed. It operates in the hottest regional economy in the country. But of 112,983 welfare cases in 1985, about 7,660, or 6.8 percent, actually got full-time jobs through ET. Even if all of those people wouldn't have found work otherwise, that isn't a big enough percentage to transform the underclass. "What we did in ET is pick off the people who are most motivated to go to work," Atkins admits. Those remaining are the least-motivated, the hardest to "seduce." ET offers those willing to work their way out of the culture of poverty a way to do it, no small thing. But it leaves the culture itself largely unscathed.

WHISTLE-WHILE-YOU-WORKFARE

IF WE COULD rely on volunteers to end the culture of poverty by working themselves out of it, we probably wouldn't have a culture of poverty in the first place. The whole problem is that there are people who won't climb up a "ladder of opportunity" even when the economy or the government dangles it in front of their noses. If it's dramatic change we want, we must look to programs that "make" people do things they might not do if they have a check coming every month. I say "make" with caution, given the liberty with which terms like "slavery" are used in the workfare debate. Nobody is talking about throwing indigents in jail if they don't work. True workfare—the mandatory kind—merely says that if you take the state's money, the state has a right to ask something in return.

That said, there is often little practical difference between ostensibly "mandatory" work programs and "voluntary" programs such as ET. I watched a crack ET caseworker, Betty Wornum, process a welfare mother who had been called in for her "registration." It was obvious that, if Wornum could help it, there was no way that woman was going to get out of the office without signing up for some sort of training program. ("I've got a real good program for you!") The "client," visibly nervous among the bureaucrats who controlled her check, was not about to stand on her rights, at least not just then.

For their part, many "mandatory" programs are not so

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mandatory after all. Some maintain large "unassigned pools" of recipients who are receiving welfare but not working. Illinois, which hopes to dissolve its unassigned pool, will nevertheless have a "modified job search component," in which the state will do little more than contact the recipient "at least" every six months. San Diego's highly publicized experimental program "required" new applicants to perform public service work. But once applicants had been "excused for health or other reasons" or obtained an "exemption," San Diego's plan didn't embrace a noticeably higher portion of the eligible welfare population than Massachusetts's.

INSTEAD OF flaunting their permissiveness ET-style, these "soft" workfare programs do formally require able-bodied welfare recipients to participate. The formal requirement performs what Richard Nathan, a Nixon welfare expert and a leading Soft Workfare advocate, calls a "signaling" function. It tells those on welfare that it's not good to sit at home, instead of "it's too bad you're a victim." Working off one's welfare grant can also teach "life skills"—the importance of showing up on time, of working with others, etc. But work requirements should not, the Softs will tell you, be "punitive." The result is a sort of whistle-while-you-workfare emphasizing the positive things working can do for a recipient, in which work requirements are not really applied to people who resist them. "Welfare mothers who don't want to work probably do have hangups, physical or emotional problems," Nathan told me—veering close to the "you're a victim" excuse-making he had just criticized.

Some Softs quite openly see workfare as a convenient conservative cover to protect the existing welfare system from Reaganite dismantling. The theory is that if the public thinks able-bodied welfare cases are being made to work, that will remove the "stigma" from welfare, and the public will be more inclined to support a generous system. But unless the beneficiaries really *are* made to work, this strategy is more than a bit cynical.

Most state workfare programs are of the soft variety. West Virginia, for example, is typically billed as one of the toughest workfare states. But it excuses welfare mothers from work when they are "job ready" (because working off their grant can't teach them anything more) or when they have "barriers" to employment—a euphemism for people who are so screwed up they won't get jobs anyway. That lets off the hook 20,000 of the 36,000 participants. Other programs only require recipients to show up for 12 or 13 weeks of "work experience."

Indeed, soft workfare usually offers alternatives to what are sometimes called "crude" work-off-your-grant schemes. "Job search," where recipients learn how to write a résumé, dress for an interview, read the want ads, and then actually look for jobs under the prodding of supervisors, became a hot alternative because it promised cheap placements—at least until a recent study by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation cast doubt on its effectiveness. Most of the programs billed in the press as "workfare" are really mandatory job search schemes with a short work "experience" requirement at the end for those who don't find a job.

In judging workfare programs, Softs ask questions like: What was the net gain in placing people in private sector jobs? In income? Did workfare teach any usable skills? At what cost? The MDRC's thick, professional, and well-publicized studies describe the incremental successes of work programs according to these measures in mincing detail. MDRC's latest report of modest gains for "work experience"—3 to 6 percent increases in private sector employment, 0 to 15 percent decreases in welfare payments—rated 20 inches in the *New York Times*. Those who oppose soft workfare tend to use the same client-centered criteria, noting evidence that work experience participants feel they aren't learning many new skills. "Sweeping streets or cleaning buildings," says Massachusetts's Atkins, "doesn't do shit for preparing someone to go and get a job in the private sector."

Of course, if you worry about the effect of welfare in sustaining the underclass, umbilical-cord style, the Softs have it all wrong. Workfare should not be a short-term program to help existing welfare clients, but a long-term program to destroy the culture of poverty. In this "hard" view, what's most important is not whether sweeping streets or cleaning buildings helps Betsy Smith, single teenage parent and high school dropout, learn skills that will help her find a private sector job. It is whether the prospect of sweeping streets and cleaning buildings for a welfare grant will deter Betsy Smith from having the illegitimate child that drops her out of school and onto welfare in the first place—or, failing that, whether the *sight* of Betsy Smith sweeping streets after having her illegitimate child will discourage her younger sisters and neighbors from doing as she did. These are questions MDRC doesn't ask, and they would be very difficult to answer if it did ask them.

HARD WORKFARE advocates, such as Robert Carleson, architect of Reagan's first-term welfare cuts, or Lawrence Mead, whose book *Beyond Entitlement* champions work requirements, think it's good when someone works off her grant, whether or not it increases her income. If she is still working for her grant two years or ten years later, it's still better than not working. If she learns some skills while sweeping and cleaning, if it motivates her to go get a private sector job, that's gravy. Where the Softs seem quite content with their modest six percent improvements in employment, the Hards at least ask the urgent question: Will program X eventually destroy the culture of poverty or only help a few escape it?

The Hard Workfare prescription is a bit of a leap into the dark, a piece of social engineering bold enough to make anyone familiar with the Law of Unintended Consequences extremely nervous. Not the least of the doubts is whether it is even possible to apply a truly mandatory work requirement to the entire caseload of a large state. None of the workfare experiments, mostly Soft, that have been going on long enough to study has been large enough

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to have a measurable impact on a big amorphous thing like Culture. That is about to change.

The Poverty Lawyers' Playpen

IF GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN, California's Republican governor, could talk like Mario Cuomo, we would all have heard more than enough about GAIN (Greater Avenues for INdependence), the welfare reform plan that sailed through his state's legislature early this year. But Deukmejian's a bore, so the most important welfare reform in decades went largely unnoticed in the Eastern press.

GAIN is big. It tries to impose a mandatory program on the largest welfare caseload in the country. GAIN is also complicated. Democrats added so many options, protections, and furbelows to Deukmejian's basic work-off-your-grant proposal that the GAIN flow chart resembles a diagram of the Chernobyl nuclear plant. As finally adopted, California's plan offers a generous menu of training and education "options" to welfare recipients in addition to "work experience," here relabeled "pre-employment preparation" (PREP). Welfare recipients (who get free day care if necessary) can choose to take vocational education, remedial education, English-as-a-second-language, among others, instead of working for their checks. This smorgasbord approach is the latest workfare fashion. Attribute it to ET's influence.

But unlike ET, under GAIN recipients must do *something*. No welfare recipient will be forced to work off her grant right away. If she doesn't get a job after training in a specific job skill, then the state may require her to work off her grant—but it must offer her a workfare job that uses the skill she has learned. Welfare mothers trained as nurses' aides may not be required to work as secretaries, etc. Only if the recipient screws up in some way—drops out of school or falls out of the training program—may she be required to take a long-term public service job unrelated to her training. These "long-term PREP" cases are reviewed every six months, and may then be recycled through the system.

As a hard workfare strategy to destroy the poverty culture, GAIN suffers from the two major structural flaws common to most such programs. First, it requires nothing of welfare mothers until their oldest child reaches the age of six. This one restriction excuses two-thirds of the welfare caseload in California. If the sight of other teenagers living on welfare after having babies is a bad influence on their contemporaries, workfare programs limited to those with school-age children may not dramatically change those background conditions. And if anyone wants to avoid the workfare obligation, one way out is obvious—she can "go home and have another baby," as California State Senator Diane Watson threatened her inner-city constitutents would do when confronted with "forced labor." Hard workfare advocates such as New York's Blanche Bernstein worry privately about this have-a-kid loophole. Bernstein would extend workfare to mothers with no children younger than three, which would bring 62 percent of the national welfare caseload into the program. Beyond that, Bernstein says she is "depending on physiological constraints"—i.e., there are only so many babies a woman can have.

Even more important, neither GAIN nor any mere "workfare" plan does much to employ those in the underclass who have few welfare benefits to "work off," namely able-bodied men. The welfare mother whose ET session I observed asked if there were any way the program could find a job for her "friend." That was the third such request the caseworker had had that day. It will be hard to break the culture of single motherhood as long as among nonwhites aged 20-24 there are only 48 employed civilian—i.e., "marriageable"—men for every 100 women (as William Julius Wilson and Kathryn Neckerman of the University of Chicago estimate). In fact, the absolute number of illegitimate black births has not been increasing, but the rate at which legitimate black families are formed has plummeted. No program is apt to arrest this decline unless it puts more men into jobs. By offering women who head fatherless families a way out of poverty, while failing to offer it to potential fathers (or childless women), work and training programs may reinforce whatever incentives in favor of single-parent families the AFDC system generates ("Have a Kid, Get Job Training").

THERE'S ANOTHER perverse incentive created by AFDC-only workfare, which might be called the Cheryl Liberatore Factor. Liberatore is the 13,000th graduate of ET in Massachusetts, a pert, enthusiastic-looking woman who may be seen on the front cover of an ET publicity brochure. "After one year, Cheryl is earning more than twice what she received on welfare and is employed as a secretary at one of Boston's largest universities," the caption reads. What the caption does not say is that before she was on welfare, Liberatore was employed in a low-wage job, but she quit it to go on welfare to qualify for ET training. Programs like ET and GAIN may not cause a stampede of Liberatores to the welfare office, but they are certainly *unfair*, in that they offer a goodie to those on welfare that isn't available to the poor suckers who labor in lousy jobs.

Even as applied to welfare mothers with school-age children, GAIN has big problems. The first, pointed out by Mead, is a dilemma common to all workfare schemes, perhaps to all political activity—namely that its harder to take something away from someone than it is not to give it to them in the first place. In workfare, what is being taken away is the right to a welfare check with no strings attached.

The government has been trying since 1967 to *require* able-bodied welfare recipients take available private sector jobs. The effort has been a failure, in part because states didn't really think welfare mothers could work, in part because it's easy to arrange not to be hired by a private employer ("All you have to do is show up drunk," a former Carter welfare official told me). But it has also failed because taking away someone's welfare benefits is a long, cumbersome business hedged about by legalistic restrictions. Workfare eliminates the first two reasons by having the government provide the job itself.

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The third problem—the Take Away problem—remains.

California's workfare statute is a poverty lawyer's playpen. Welfare recipients don't have to participate in GAIN if they are "seriously dependent upon alcohol or drugs," if they have "an emotional or mental problem," a "medically verified illness," "legal difficulties," or a "severe family crisis." Participants may not be penalized for failing to work if the job they are offered is more than one hour or *one mile's walk* away from their home (those California winters!), if the job is "not related to the individual's capability to perform the task on a regular basis" (whatever that means), if the government fails to give them, not one, but a choice of *two* day-care arrangments, if the government fails to provide "necessary" services, if it rains ("inclement weather or other act of nature precludes . . . other persons similarly situated . . . "), etc. etc. etc., including the lawyers' favorite elastic clause, "good cause." The law announces in advance that recipients may be absent or tardy ten percent of the time without penalty.

A RECIPIENT who refuses to work will first lose the right to spend her grant as she sees fit—the welfare office will assume "management" of her money, paying her landlord directly, and so on. If she continues to refuse, and is somehow shown at all the various hearings and appeals to have had no excuse, the ultimate penalty is not loss of her entire grant. Federal law limits the penalty to only that portion of the grant designated for her own personal support—about $115 to $120 a month, according to California officials, out of an average combined AFDC-Food Stamp grant of about $700 a month for a family of three.

To this impressive array of loopholes California adds a peculiarly revealing one: no recipient has to take a private sector job if it is "at a wage level that results in a net loss of income." This clause reflects one of the genuine practical riddles of welfare reform, the Low Wage dilemma. The dilemma is simply that the sort of jobs welfare recipients can get in the marketplace will not support a mother with kids—so that any decent welfare standard will pay more than most potential jobs. Under California's rules, a job must pay more than welfare *after* child care, transportation, and health insurance. If the average monthly benefit for a mother with two kids is $700, and if you figure that child care costs $200 and health insurance and transportation $100, that means the state can only require this average welfare mother to take a private sector job paying the equivalent of $1,000 a month, or $5.76 an hour. Remember that in Massachusetts, the most prosperous state of the union, half the successful ET graduates made less than $4.50 and you have some idea of the task California has set for itself.

Faced with the dilemma of low wages, California has simply grasped one horn, embracing what might be called the Good Jobs Fallacy. At a famous set of hearings staged by the National Welfare Rights Organization in 1970, militant welfare mothers pounded the table and declared, "We only want the kind of jobs that will pay $10,000 or $20,000." California's scheme comes close to accepting the very moral assumption workfare is supposed to deny—that it's OK to stay home and get a check, so if we want recipients to work we must offer something better than "menial" or "dead end" jobs. Through an elaborate training and education effort, it seeks to enable its welfare clientele to get these "good jobs." But the unpleasant truth is that most of the jobs available to long-term welfare mothers will be menial, dead end jobs. There's also that annoying question of fairness again. A great many Americans work in dead end jobs. According to Columbia labor market expert Eli Ginzberg, 40 percent of the jobs in the economy are "bad jobs" paying low wages and offering little chance for advancement. Are all these people to be given the option of going on the dole?

But mightn't the prospect of having to work off your grant in a public service job provide an incentive to take a "bad" private sector job even if it's not required? Not likely, at least in a state with generous welfare benefits. The minimum rate at which California workfarers work off their grants is set at $5.07. But because workfare hours are limited to 32 a week (to leave a day for job search) no matter how high a welfare mother's benefit, many recipients will in effect be earning more per hour. Workfare may not be as good a deal as just getting a check, but it's likely to be a better deal than any private job a welfare mother can find (especially if workfare comes with free child care and Medicaid). Won't welfare recipients begin stacking up in workfare jobs? At this point, GAIN's architects begin to talk about how embarrassing it is to be on workfare, how it's not really a "job" at all. Workfare advocates like Nathan may hope it removes the "stigma" of depending on the government, but in California they are relying on stigma.

What will the workfare workers do, anyway? GAIN officials estimate that about 20 percent of those participating in GAIN will end up on long-term workfare. That's a minimum of 34,000 jobs, with a maximum of . . . who knows? Ah, but there are plenty of things to do, you say. Roads are crumbling. Playgrounds and schools are falling into disrepair. Streets are increasingly filthy. The elderly need care. Have workfarers help perform some of these jobs and the public will see it's getting something for its money. Isn't that what liberals always meant by the government being the employer of last resort?

PERHAPS, BUT YOU don't hear too many liberals saying that anymore, for a simple reason: public employee unions. They are a bedrock Democratic interest group, and they hate workfare. Their most obvious fear is that low-paid workfare workers will be used to displace regular, highly paid union members. Even if no regular workers lose their jobs, and even if all workfare workers were paid the same as regular workers, workfare would still depress wages of existing workers by forcing them to compete with people hungrier than they are. At the Washington headquarters of AFSCME, the nation's largest public employee union, there is a spare, windowless office occupied by a kindly man named Al Russo. Russo's job is to fight any attempt to employ the destitute in public service jobs. The row of files behind him, each with the name of a different state, shows he's been busy lately.

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If AFSCME can't kill a workfare scheme, it settles for statutory language to protect its members. In California, Democrats inserted a few key clauses written by AFSCME's lobbyist. As a result, not only may no current state employees be fired to make way for workfare workers, but none may be deprived of overtime. No work "customarily performed" by union members may be performed by welfare recipients. And no workfare slots may be opened at any agency in which regular employees are on layoff—which, in the land of Prop. 13, means most agencies.

CALIFORNIA officials, in fact, have given up on using workfare recipients in state agencies. They hope, instead, to put them to work in the nonprofit sector. The United Way, the American Red Cross, the Urban League, and organizations that supply "adult services" and "child care services" are mentioned as possible job sites. One L.A. official suggested workfare workers might be assigned to welfare rights organizations, where they would presumably work to abolish workfare.

This nonprofit gambit sharply restricts the number of potential jobs. It also means that workfare workers will almost never actually build anything, clean anything, or perform any service useful enough for the government to already be doing it itself. Meanwhile, if you're looking for a potential swamp of makework, the nonprofit sector, which has neither the discipline of the bottom line nor that of the ballot box, is a good place to start.

The biggest potential swamp is training itself. When people pay for their own training, they're likely to try to make it worth the money. This self-motivation is less likely when the programs are offered free (as with ET), and even less likely still if training is a way to avoid workfare, as with GAIN. Sound alarmist? Here is how Willie Brown, speaker of the California assembly, described his vision of his state's plan: "[You] will agree to go through a series of training programs, we will agree to increase your welfare benefits, your child care benefits, your grooming benefits, and all the other things. At the end of the training we'll start a search process to place you. If after a series of incidents at which we have attempted to place you and there's nonavailability, starting the next January you'll come back to us. We'll talk again. If we haven't been successful at finding you a job, then we'll put you in another training program . . . and we keep this process going, maybe forever."

Maybe California is just too Soft. Those searching for a government trying to impose hard workfare on a big urban caseload might look to the Koch administration in New York City. Koch's welfare officials like workfare for its deterrent effect. They have tended to favor programs with few loopholes and programs that keep recipients working off their grants for long periods, if necessary. Koch's problem is Governor Cuomo, whose administration resisted even a city effort that applied workfare only to mothers with no child under 14. Last October, Koch aides finally convinced Cuomo to approve a new plan for New York City in which workfare is supplemented by a number of training and work options. Cuomo promptly hogged the headlines when his administration leaked the plan to the press and pledged to extend it statewide.

Cuomo has only embraced workfare of the softest sort. His statewide plan, still being debated in Albany, falls for the Good Jobs Fallacy in a big way, promising "individualized" training for "salaried" jobs to be created in "opportunity zones" as part of a "new partnership" between business and labor. Workfare assignments are a last resort, only when it will "enhance the employability of the recipient," and then only for six months. In May, New York City welfare official Herb Rosenzweig charged that Cuomo's statewide proposal would "emasculate" the city's plan. Nathan, a workfare moderate, calls Cuomo's effort "a lot of air."

Even Koch's relatively tough program is limited to mothers with children over six—just one-fifth of the New York City caseload. And, in another indication of how difficult it is to require work from those who are already getting a welfare check, some 40 percent of the cases called up so far this year are listed as "pended," meaning they are in some stage of ajudication.

Only Work Works

WHAT WOULD A program that had a real chance of undermining the underclass look like? The deficiencies in the efforts currently underway give us some idea. First, it would be a program that expects women to work even if they have young children. Second, it would offer work to ghetto men and single women as well as to the welfare mothers. Third, it will have to deal with the related Take Away and Low Wage dilemmas: how can you require welfare recipients to accept private jobs if they pay less than welfare? How can you avoid making workfare or training more lucrative than private sector work?

Solving these problems will take something more radical than any existing workfare plan. It must be far bigger, in order to offer jobs to men, and far tougher in its dealings with young mothers. Above all, the program must unambiguously announce the cultural norm it seeks to promote in place of the culture of welfare.

What is required, I think, is something like this: replacing all cash-like welfare programs that assist the able-bodied poor (AFDC, general relief, Food Stamps, and housing subsidies, but not Medicaid) with a single, simple offer from the government—an offer of employment for every American citizen over 18 who wants it, in a useful public job at a wage slightly below the minimum wage. If you could work, and needed money, you would not be given a check (welfare). You would not be given a check and then cajoled, instructed, and threatened into working it off or "training it off" (workfare). You would be given the location of several government job sites. If you showed up, and worked, you would be paid for your work. If you don't show up, you don't get paid. Simple.

Unlike "workfare" jobs, these jobs would be available to everybody, men as well as women, single or married, mothers and fathers alike. No perverse "anti-family" incentives. No "means test" either. If David Rockefeller showed up, he

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could work too. But he wouldn't. Most Americans wouldn't. The low wage itself would "ration" the jobs to those who needed them most, and preserve the incentive to look for better work in the private sector. Instead of paying what in effect are high workfare "wages" and then relying on the stigma of welfare to encourage people to leave, this program would pay low wages but remove the stigma. Those who worked in the jobs would be earning their money. They could hold their heads up. They would also have something most unemployed underclass members desperately need: a supervisor they could give as a job reference to other employers. Although the best workers could be promoted to higher paying public service positions, for most workers movement into the private sector would take care of itself. If you have to work anyway, why do it for $3 an hour?

Those who didn't take advantage of these jobs, however, would be on their own. No cash doles. Mothers included. (Remember, we're only talking here about those able to work.) People who show up drunk for their jobs, who show up high, or who pick a fight with their supervisor could be fired (though they could show up again after a decent interval). There would be no need to "require" work. Work would be all that was offered. The problem of having to take away high benefits to force low-wage work would be solved by simply not providing those benefits in the first place.

This is not a new idea. Similar proposals have been advanced in the past by Russell Long and (of all people) Arthur Burns. Basically, it makes the same decision Franklin Roosevelt made in 1934, when he decided to replace a system of cash relief for the able-bodied with the Work Projects Administration, the WPA. Liberals who invoke Roosevelt's "compassionate" legacy tend to forget this anti-dole decision. Meanwhile, Reagan gleefully quotes Roosevelt's description of the dole as "a narcotic," somehow failing to mention that FDR said it in the speech where he proposed the largest government jobs program in the nation's history. In fact, FDR's anti-dole and pro-WPA opinions were of a piece, a decision in favor of work-welfare and against cash-welfare.

OF COURSE, Roosevelt's WPA was designed to combat general unemployment at a time when most of those needing "relief" were veteran workers and nobody imagined that the tiny AFDC program, nestled unnoticed in the New Deal structure, would one day sustain millions of husbandless mothers. Our goal, in contrast, is to break the culture of poverty by providing jobs for ghetto men and women who may have no prior work habits, at the same time as we end the option of a life on welfare for single mothers. It is the transformation of the welfare state into the Work Ethic State, in which status, dignity, and government benefits flow only to those who work, but in which the government steps in to make sure work is available to all. There are a number of obvious objections to so simple a solution:

Will the wage be enough to support a family? No. This is the Low Wage dilemma. The poverty line for a family of three is $8,570. A full-time, minimum-wage job brings in only $7,000, and the government jobs proposed here would pay less than that. But there are ways to supplement the incomes of low-wage workers outside the welfare system (while preserving an incentive to seek better pay). The current Earned Income Tax Credit is one, the innovative Wage Rate Subsidy system of Brandeis professor Robert Lerman (which would pay half the difference between the family breadwinner's wage and $6 an hour) is another. Even Ronald Reagan once proposed this approach while testifying against the guaranteed income in 1972.

A subsidized wage would, in effect, be a guaranteed income *for those who work* (a far more affordable proposition than an income guarantee that doesn't have a base of wages to start from). There is no objection, in the Work Ethic State, to the government sending out checks as long as able-bodied people only get them if they work. Supplementing wages is a much better solution to the Low Wage problem than pretending the underclass can get "good jobs" that pay enough in themselves to support a family.

Will people be allowed to starve? The state's basic obligation, in this scheme, is to provide dignified work for all who can work, and a decent income for the disabled. There will be those who refuse work. Many ghetto men, at least initially, will prefer the world of crime, hustle, and odd jobs to working for "chump change." One advantage of the Work Ethic State is that criminals can be treated as criminals, without residual guilt about the availability of jobs. Others—the addled and addicted—will simply fail at working, or not even try. Even a fraction of welfare mothers, the most employable underclass group, will have trouble. "The workplace is so foreign to so many people who are second- and third-generation dependents," says Tom Nees, a Washington, D.C., minister whose Community of Hope works with welfare families poor enough to be homeless.

The first underclass generation *off* welfare will be the roughest. Those people who fail at work will be thrown into the world of austere public in-kind guarantees—homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and the like—and the world of private charitable organizations like Nees's. This aid would be stigmatizing (as it must be if work is to be honored), but it could be compassionate. Nobody would starve. Counseling, therapy, training, could be offered, even subsidized by the government, in order to help these people back on their feet. The one thing the government would not offer them is cash.

What about mothers with young children? The government would announce that, after a certain date, single mothers would no longer qualify for cash welfare payments. The central ambiguity of our welfare system—whether single mothers should work—would be resolved cleanly and clearly in favor of work. This hard choice is a key way the Work Ethic State would hope to break the self-perpetuating culture of poor, single-parent families. Teenage mothers who had babies could no longer count on welfare to sustain them. They would have to work like everyone else, and the prospect of juggling motherhood and a not-very-lucrative job would make them think

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twice, although it would also offer a way out of poverty that Charles Murray's starvation solution would deny.

What would the children do when their mothers were working? If the government is going to expect poor mothers to work, then it will have to provide day care for all those who need it. This will be expensive (Massachusetts pays $2,800 a year for each day-care slot). But it won't be as prohibitively expensive as many who raise the day-care issue seem to believe. In every state in which free day care has been offered to AFDC mothers, demand has fallen below predictions. "It is never utilized to the extent people thought it would be," says Barbara Goldman of MDRC. Most mothers, it seems, prefer to make their own arrangements. Whether those arrangements are any good is another question. The government might actually have to take steps to encourage day care, as part of the general trend toward getting kids out of underclass families and into school at an early age.

What about mothers with very young children, two years and under? A desititute mother with a newborn infant presents the basic AFDC dilemma in its starkest form. It *is* a dilemma, meaning there are arguments on both sides. One alternative is to allow temporary cash welfare for the first two years of a child's life, with a three-year limit to avoid the have-another-kid loophole. A two-year-free ride is better than a six-year free ride. Teenagers are likely to be friends with someone in their community who has a two-year-old kid and is "up against it," as Murray puts it. On the other hand, no free ride at all (except for in-kind nutritional assistance during pregnancy and infancy to avoid disastrous health problems) would clearly have stronger impact. It would also put mothers into the world of work without letting them grow accustomed to dependency. Oklahoma applies its soft workfare requirement to mothers as soon as their kids are born, with no apparent ill effects.

AND if a mother refuses? The short, nasty answer is that if a mother turns down the state's offer of a job with which she might support her children, and as a result her children live in squalor and filth, then she has neglected a basic task of parenthood. She is subject to the laws that already provide for removal of a child from an unfit home.

What about teenagers who haven't even finished high school? They could receive free day care while finishing, and in-kind nutritional assistance, but no cash. To obtain any extra cash necessary to support a baby, they would have to work, in one of the guaranteed government jobs if necessary. Again, the government could offer as many free training programs as it wanted, but without cash entitlements. Since training would no longer be an alternative to working, trainees would have every incentive to make the most of it.

Will there be enough jobs these people can do? As noted above, the objection can't be that there aren't enough worthwhile jobs to be done. The crumbling "infrastructure" that preoccupied Washington three years ago hasn't been patched up overnight. All around the country governments have stopped doing, for financial reasons, things they once thought worthwhile, like opening libraries on Saturday and picking up trash twice a week. Why not do them again?

BUT THERE are plausible doubts whether the welfare recipients who would need public service employment are suited to doing all these worthwhile jobs. One objection has to do with women and physical labor. Are we really going to have teenage girls repairing potholes and painting bridges? One response is, why not? Women can fill potholes and paint bridges (and water lawns and pick up garbage), just as women can be telephone repairmen and sailors. Feminism has rightly destroyed the sex stereotypes that used to surround much physical work. Anyway, there are many non-arduous "women's" jobs that need doing—nurses' aides, Xerox operators, receptionists, clerks, coat checkers, cooks, and cleaners. Private schools often require parents to keep order on playgrounds twice a month. Public schools might employ one or two parents to do the same full-time. Day-care centers could too. Is there any point in offering women free day care and then putting some of them to work in day-care centers? Yes. First, that would still free up a lot of women for employment. Second, and more important, the day-care jobs would exist within the culture of work—with alarm clocks to set, appointments to keep, and bosses to please—rather than the culture of welfare.

A second objection has to do with competence. Can an illiterate, immature high school dropout be trusted to work in a hospital as a nurses' aide, or in a public office as a clerk? Maybe not. But who can't sweep a floor? The liberals who make this objection often seem to have an opinion of underclass capability that makes William Shockley look generous. In fact, supervisors of soft-workfare workers polled by MDRC rated welfare recipients as productive as regular entry-level workers. For those with severe limitations—well, even a leaf-raking job rakes leaves. If that's all someone's capable of doing, does that mean she shouldn't be paid for doing it? The alternative, remember, is to pay her to stay home and raise children.

A third objection is that any program will inevitably degenerate into makework. Exhibit A here is not the WPA, which left a whole legacy of valuable public works. Even Reagan has been known to get misty-eyed about the WPA. The problem is CETA, the Ford-Carter program that is now universally condemned as a boondoggle. CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) was a disaster for a variety of reasons, but one big reason was that doing anything useful would have offended unions. Construction unions insisted on restrictions that basically precluded CETA from building anything. AFSCME was on guard lest CETA provide any useful service that might be performed by civil servants. So we wound up with CETA workers in experimental film workshops and mime troupes. In California they took a dog and cat census.

It's not as if government unions are wrong to think a guaranteed job program will hurt them. It will. It's not as if the unions can be easily "bought off." I asked AFSCME's

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Russo if there was anything—any bribe, compromise, or protective language that would allow his union to sign off on the idea of low-wage public service jobs. He had a ready answer: "No." At some point, if we are serious about breaking the poverty culture, we must be serious enough to sacrifice the interests of this protected group. Why should well-paid government workers be shielded from the competitive labor market at the expense of the poorest segment of society?

Pragmatism, if not fairness, requires that no current government workers be laid off. As those workers leave through natural attrition, however, the government would be free to replace them with guaranteed jobholders. Guaranteed job projects could then be chosen on the basis of how useful they are, not whether a union objects to them. Wherever possible, they would be designed to produce a tangible benefit—collected garbage, a clean subway station, a basketball hoop with a new net—that the public could see. If they took underclass workers outside the ghetto, so much the better. Projects could be ongoing, expanding as necessary in times of high unemployment. Vague-sounding service efforts—drop-in centers for veterans, community organizing—would be avoided, not because they aren't valuable, but because results are hard to measure and the possibility of spending all day doing very little is high.

Yes, public works jobs would be relatively inefficient compared with their private sector counterparts. The government would have to learn to work with the dregs of the labor market, and the program (like the most successful War on Poverty program, the Job Corps) would have to be relatively authoritarian. Boondoggles would happen. But at least the public would be getting *something* for its money.

Won't it cost a fortune? The WPA, at its peak, employed 3.3 million people full time. CETA, at its peak, 750,000. At the pit of the past recession, there were 11.4 million unemployed (4.6 million for more than 15 weeks). What fraction of them would want subminimum-wage jobs—and how many of those not in the labor force would come out of the woodwork to claim those jobs—is anybody's guess. It's usually more expensive, at least initially, to give people jobs than it is to give people cash welfare. Jobs require materials and expensive supervisors. A reasonable estimate, based on previous programs, is about $10,000 per job. That's $10 billion for every million jobs. Pretty soon you're talking real money. The long-run savings, of course, would be huge if the welfare culture was absorbed into the working, taxpaying culture. In the short run, however, welfare savings would be less, and the benefit of the work done would show up as savings only if it was work the government would be doing anyway. Would these short-term savings balance out the extra short-term costs? Probably not. Who cares? The point isn't to save money.

THE POINT IS to enforce the work ethic. This is a long-term cultural offensive, not a budget-control program or an expression of compassion. The sharpness and simplicity of its choices—no cash welfare for the able-bodied, no exceptions for parenthood—are its main virtue, because they embody with unmistakable clarity the social norms that are in danger of disappearing in the underclass culture.

Liberals, in particular, should leap at the chance to reassert those values. The Work Ethic State proclaims the equal dignity of all who work, an idea that seems more Democratic than Republican. In any case, it's very American. If it helps, ambitious liberals might note that every poll ever taken shows that cash for the disabled and jobs for the able-bodied is what the public supports. Now is a propitious moment to appeal to these sentiments, because the current workfare boom gives liberals a chance to achieve, through the back door, the ancient Democratic dream of a guaranteed job. Indeed, workfare, expanded to include everyone and not just single mothers, *is* a guaranteed job. But I won't tell if you won't.

CERTAINLY WE can't rely on the new conservative poverty fighters to save the day. The feverish reforming now under way is long on ambition and short on institutional memory. One young Reagan official was cited recently in the *Washington Post* as being shocked, shocked, that "a welfare mother who ventures to work sometimes loses as much in benefit reductions as she earns." But of course it was liberals in the late 1960s who tried to cure this problem, by providing "work incentives" that let welfare mothers keep part of what they earned. It was Reagan who got rid of them when they didn't work.

Reagan's main welfare task force, headed by a second-echelon official named Charles Hobbs, has been sending out signals in all directions. One memo, circulated to several states, contains a bland and self-contradictory list of "policy goals" virtually identical to the list issued by Jimmy Carter eight years ago. There is talk of letting each state devise its own welfare program, financed by federal "bloc grants."

Some type of work program is likely to emerge from this conservative rethinking. But already many conservatives are having second thoughts about the WPA-like implications of workfare. A few Reagan advisers, like Carleson, still favor it. But others, such as former OMB counsel Michael Horowitz, are lobbying for an austere cash system. Still others would make welfare temporary. The fact is that conservatives are ideologically incapable of solving the underclass problem. It takes more government than they can stomach. Reforming welfare means requiring work. Requiring work eventually means providing government jobs. Requiring work of welfare mothers means a large day-care program. The work ethic culture we want to establish is a national culture, and it requires a national program, not a federalist cacophony.

The Reaganites need help. If they ask for it, if they seek to learn from past mistakes, liberals, who have had plenty of opportunities for such learning, might usefully start by telling them this: Welfare doesn't work. Work "incentives" don't work. Training doesn't work. Work "requirements" don't work. "Work experience" doesn't work and even workfare doesn't quite work. Only work works. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Fantasy As Fallout Shelter

The Manhattan Project
(20th Century-Fox)

Here are the principal myths on which *The Manhattan Project* is built:

1. Any scientifically gifted American high school boy—it's never a girl—can understand the work of adult scientists, particularly if the subject is computers or nuclear physics.

2. Any such high school boy—sometimes accompanied by a girlfriend—who gets in a jam with government agencies never panics and can battle them to a standstill.

3. Youth is purity. A high school person, male or female, is ipso facto the moral superior of an adult.

4. Despite No. 3, plain folks are wonderful. If only the chicanery of power groups around the world were made known, the public would wipe away their wiles and would bring about honesty and peace in the world. In every country, ordinary people like you and me are just waiting to make the world perfect, if only governments would give us the chance.

These have all proved to be serviceable myths in filmmaking because they are all potent forms of ego balm and vengeance. They raise *Tom Swift and His Electric Rifle* to a higher power at the same time that they ridicule those white-coated lab know-it-alls who make us feel ignorant. The myths indict the world as the eventual corrupter of humankind, which is born pure; yet, despite these taints, John and Jane Doe remain fundamentally good. The myths go even further: they assure us that we remain fundamentally good because we don't overreach. We very sensibly keep ourselves ordinary, outside the dirty domains of eminence and power. And that resident good in us could still save the world if only the powerful would permit it.

These myths, used individually or in differing combinations, work effectively. (*WarGames* and *Back to the Future* are recent examples.) All four of them are used in *The Manhattan Project*—more effectively than could have been planned.

It's a small surprise that this film comes from Marshall Brickman, who directed and co-wrote with Thomas Baum. Brickman's two previous films, *Simon* (also co-written with Baum) and *Lovesick*, were failed smart-party jokes. They assumed a certain chic, were launched smugly, and collapsed quickly. But Brickman aims his new picture at Just Folks and does much better. Prior to his own work, Brickman collaborated with Woody Allen on *Sleeper*, *Annie Hall*, and *Manhattan*, and his own first two films yearned Allen-ward. Not here. The dialogue in the new one is nimble enough, but there is no grope for Allen comparison. Brickman is neither Capra nor Spielberg—as yet, anyway—but they are his new foster parents.

John Lithgow plays a physicist who has discovered a method of refining plutonium more purely than ever before, with lasers. The government builds a large lab for him in Ithaca, New York, where, behind a facade intended to mislead passersby and visitors, Lithgow can produce the stuff for weaponry. In Ithaca he has to rent an apartment; thus he meets a real estate agent about his age, Jill Eikenberry, to whom he is attracted. She is separated from her husband and lives with her 17-year-old son, Christopher Collet, a science buff. To influence both mother and son—in different ways, of course—Lithgow invites Collet on a tour of the lab and feeds the youth the usual misleading tour-guide guff. But Collet sees, understands, and infers enough to guess the truth. With his girlfriend, Cynthia Nixon, he maneuvers to steal a small jar of the liquified plutonium so that he can blow the lid—figuratively—on the dangerous operation that is being carried out without the knowledge of the community. To certify his warning, as well as to underscore his own abilities, Collet sets up a small lab of his own and makes an atomic bomb. He means it to be his exhibit at a science fair for high school students in New York City. (This last is the only small excuse for the title, which—is it remembered?—was the code name for the World War II project to design and build nuclear weapons.)

The success of the plutonium theft, along with Collet's ability to tool the parts and make the bomb, I am not going to question. Inner consistency, not hard credibility, is what mythology needs and, in this case, has. The same applies to the fact that, having discovered the theft, Lithgow and the military and the CIA track Collet and Nixon to the science fair but can't capture them. With the aid of other teenage scientists who sympathize, the teenage lovers escape with the bomb. (What happens to those teenagers who helped the pair? The picture tells us not.) Everything is contrived to end in a confrontation between Collet and Lithgow in the Ithaca plant, with the youth holding an armed bomb in his lap and the fate of the northeast United States (for starters) in his hands. The bomb, as the reader can see out the window or on TV, doesn't go off. The ultimate decisions are moral. At the end, with some townsfolk as witnesses and safeguards—against the riflemen posted all around—Lithgow and Collet walk out

FILMS WORTH SEEING

My Beautiful Laundrette. Pakistanis in London today. Tender, funny, appropriately harsh. Exceptional acting and directing compensate for some looseness. (Reviewed 4/7/86)

A Room with a View. With a better leading woman, this would replicate Forster well. As is, the rest of the cast and the very look of the film are rewarding. (3/24/86)

Tea in the Harem. North African adolescents in Paris. Their troubles are internationally recognizable, but the talent of the writer-director, Mehdi Charef, is extraordinary. (6/16/86)

Vagabond. The mystery of a girl's wanderings is sealed by her accidental death. Agnès Varda wrote and directed with rigor and empathy. Sandrine Bonnaire, as the teenage vagabond, is unforgettable. (6/2/86)

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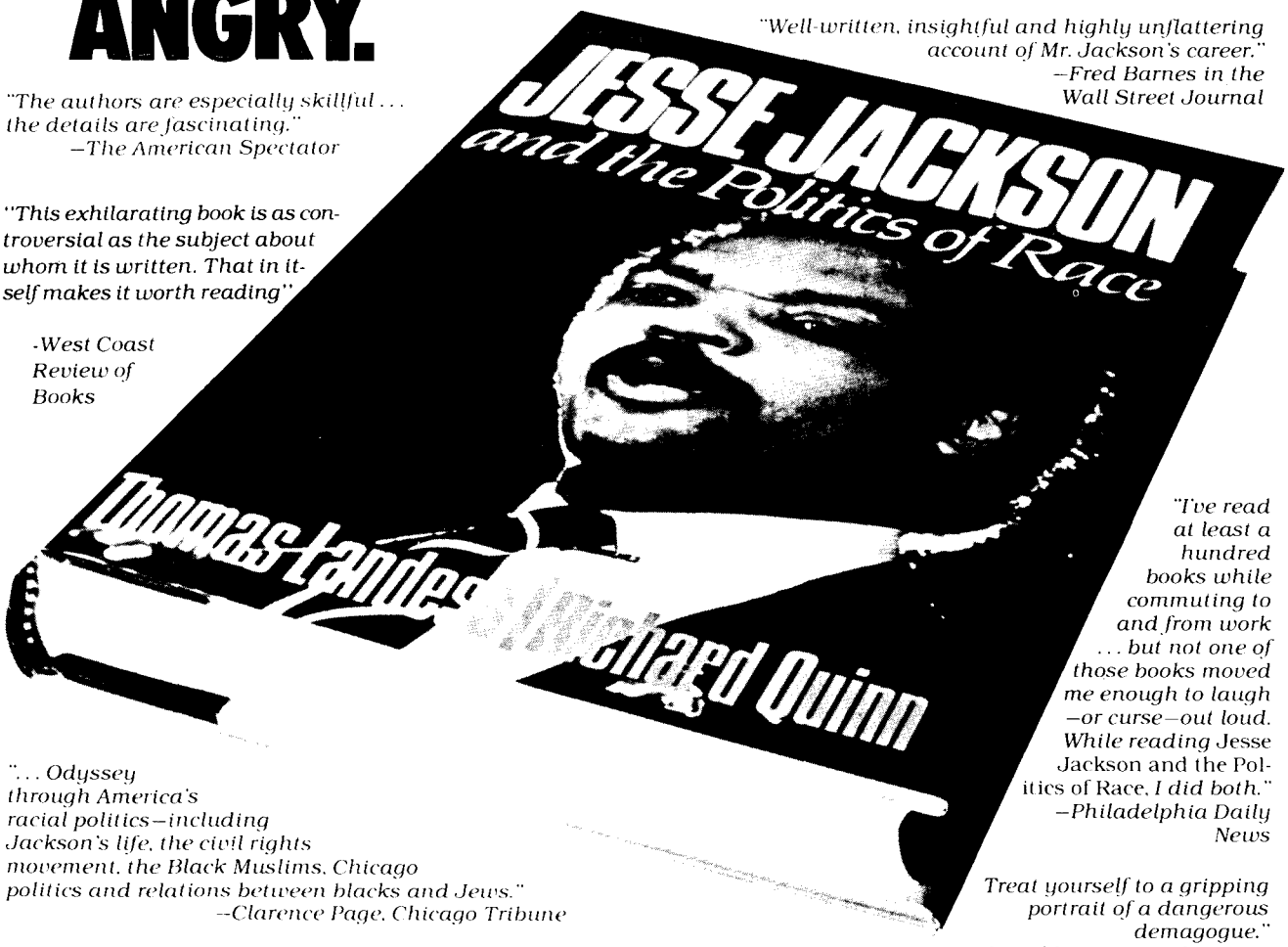

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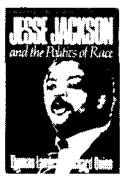

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together, having put nuclear work behind them. A (so to speak) little child has led us.

Lithgow helps the picture greatly with his unhandsome earnestness and his humor. Collet and Nixon are adequate. Eikenberry is pleasant. The technological designs by Bran Ferren are persuasive, and the music by Philippe Sarde is notable—mysterious, pulsing, without banality.

All the above would have produced, in any event, a pleasant fantasy, by reason of the myths used. But something has happened since this film was finished: Chernobyl. The Soviet accident doesn't make the film's evacuation and annihilation jokes inappropriate: it makes them all the more wanly right. After all, the accident at Chernobyl was relatively minor: the malfunction was in only one of the four generators in only one of the almost 400 currently active nuclear energy plants in the world. Yet it will be years, perhaps decades, before the final results of the accident are known. *The Manhattan Project* plays with the possibility of an atomic bomb explosion in a plant full of plutonium. Certainly the story is a Hollywood concoction. But the reality of Chernobyl gives a resonance to this concoction that couldn't have been foreseen when the picture was started. (Three Mile Island, frightening as it was, doesn't compare with even what we know of Chernobyl so far.)

For a long time, we have accepted, adored, the myths used again in this film. Now we need them more than ever, even though we know more clearly than ever that they *are* myths. But we also know now that, risky as they are, they are not necessarily more risky than the assurances from authority that we are safe.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

One-Person Shows

Because the commercial theater is at present too enfeebled to generate any trends, theater critics have no material for end-of-season generalizations. I mean, it's bad enough that shows are closing and attendance is down, but pretty soon reviewers will be joining actors on the unemployment line—which may strike some as a form of poetic justice. In a slightly desperate effort to keep my job a little longer, I'm going to try and identify what I perceive to be a relatively new fashion in contemporary theater: the one-man and one-woman show.

Sex & Death to the Age 14
by Spalding Gray

Mistero Buffo
by Dario Fo

The multiplication of these offerings is, of course, a direct consequence of Broadway's celebrated economic woes. At a time when conventional forms of theater are sinking under burdensome costs, one-person shows offer the precious advantage of reasonable budgets, supporting but a single Equity actor and very little in the way of physical production outside of a table, a microphone, a change of costume, and a glass of water. Furthermore, the featured performer often functions as his own writer and director, which reduces not only royalties but the opportunity for disputes between stars and collaborators. What a blessing in the matter of program and poster billing alone!

The vogue of one-person shows, which started last year with Whoopi Goldberg, is now threatening to become epidemic. So far, the 1985-86 New York theater season has featured Lily Tomlin winning a Tony for *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe*, Eric Bogosian doing contemporary character riffs in *Drinking in America* at the American Place, Dario Fo and Franca Rame alternating dazzling virtuoso evenings at the Joyce Theater, and Spalding Gray unfolding a trilogy of monologues at Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse. The essence of theater being conflict conveyed through dialogue and action, the one-person show probably belongs more to narrative form than to drama (even the solo actor Thespis had a chorus to keep him company on the stage). Still, and undeniably, there is dramatic satisfaction in watching a splendid actor shed characters like skins while creating scenes and telling tales in ancient bardic fashion.

Spalding Gray is not so much a character actor as an engaging human being with what appears to be total recall about his life. I'd enjoyed his work on tour, but I dropped down to the Mitzi E. Newhouse to take another look at *Sex and Death to the Age 14*, the earliest of his autobiographical monologues. I wanted to see how he worked a New York audience—which is to say a disjointed group from hither and yon, with no particular geographical center. The absence of a core community made Gray's presentation somewhat nervous—he spoke rather faster than usual and with some uncertainty. Otherwise, he kept his customary charm and intimacy. Gray is an attractive man in his late forties with brown-gray hair and diabolical eyebrows, a former actor with the Wooster Group who, for the past seven years, has been accumulating an oral history of his time. Dressed in a Sears Roebuck checked shirt, blue jeans, and black Reeboks, he appears on stage with the houselights up, and after diffidently greeting the audience, sits down at a table and unrolls memories, using a loose-leaf notebook as his prompter.

Sex and Death is the story of his childhood in Barrington, Rhode Island, and his evolution into sexual awareness behind the stern, repressive backs of his Christian Science family. It is also a history of dead pets, from one cocker spaniel who continually took chunks out of Gray's flesh, to another who got killed chasing cars, to a series of cats (most of them named Mittens) who ended up in various states of rigor mortis. Gray recounts his early experience of animal deaths with the same awed innocence with which he tells of his mother washing his "tinkler" ("I never knew it could be pleasurable until much later when I got to do it myself"). It is intriguing how this "normal" small-town childhood—the familiar bucolic material of so many plays and movies—could be so full of dread and ignorance. Kenneth Tynan once wrote a parody of *Our Town* that had the Stage Manager musing on lynchings and Jew-baiting, but Gray reveals that if Thornton Wilder ignored these social issues, it was because they were virtually unknown in New England villages: "I never saw a black, a Jew, or a double bed until I moved to Boston."

What Wilder really omitted from his small-town portraits, however, were the erotic components, and Gray generously

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fills in the lacunae. Telling of his first book of pornographic photos—it showed a man putting his semi-erection into a glass of water being drunk by a girl ("Did our parents do this in order to have us?")—then of a friend who amused himself by displaying his rectum, then of his petting sessions with Judy Brooks ("What?" asked an outraged friend. "You touched the place she pees out of?"), and finally of his first ejaculation after masturbating with a Davy Crockett beaver cap, Gray creates an erotic history of early adolescence that does for New England Protestants what Lenny Bruce and Philip Roth did for New York and New Jersey Jews. The piece ends with Gray, a rebellious teenager with "attitudinal problems," informing the headmaster of a private school that "since they invented the H-bomb, there is no more future."

DARIO FO has been called the funniest man in the world, and to judge from *Mistero Buffo* (Comic Mystery), his title is unchallenged and assured. While his wife, Franca Rame, a passionate, handsome actress, is performing contemporary skits about the subjugation of women in *Tutta Casa, Letto e Chiesa* (It's All Bed, Board, and Church), Fo is fully engaged with an ancient historical tradition: he is the direct heir of those medieval Italian iconoclasts known as *giullàri*. To watch Fo perform is to see the glue that binds great Western comedy through the ages, from its roots in the satire of the goliards (and later Rabelais) on the excesses of the Church, through commedia del l'arte and Molière, to its modern culmination in such cinematic clowns as Chaplin, Keaton, and the Marx Brothers.

Fo uses an improvised language he calls *grammelot*—a hodgepodge of dialects, peasant idioms, and invented sounds based on his parodic imitations of French, British, or American speech. Costumed in anarchist black slacks and shirt, with Marxist red socks, the white-haired Fo, with his chipmunk teeth and twinkling eyes, introduces his skits with quasi-historical discourses (translated by the amiable Ron Jenkins) before launching into hilarious *grammelot* character sketches, rendered (rather unnecessarily) through English supertitles. These skits vary from night to night, according to the audience and the whims of the actor, but usually begin with his great acting triumph, the impersonation of a *zanni* so ravenously hungry that he consumes his own intestines as if they were spaghetti. (He then proceeds to gourmandize a fly.) Here Fo demonstrates comedy's indebtedness to mime, as he munches, slurps, chews, and digests imaginary objects, exalting his appetites in a grumbling basso voice. In his next piece, following a lecture on Molière's debt to Italian commedia traditions, he describes French fashions during the age of Louis XIV, informing us that the enormous wigs of that period were determined by the Sun King's small head, and that the mincing walk and court minuet resulted from the difficulty of urinating through miles of French lace.

Fo's most indignant satire is reserved for the second part of the evening, the mystery play itself, when he speaks from the standpoint of a disappointed religious man, mourning the betrayal of the hierarchy of spirit by the hierarchy of office. Ridiculing the vice of indulgences—the sale of absolution for profit by greedy clerics—and the medieval passion for collecting sanctified relics (the bones of one saint are later discovered to be the remains of a woolly mammoth), Fo proceeds to create a comic reconstruction of the resurrection of Lazarus as seen from the perspective of the hawkers and concessionaires. This Monty Python number segues into a ferocious attack on

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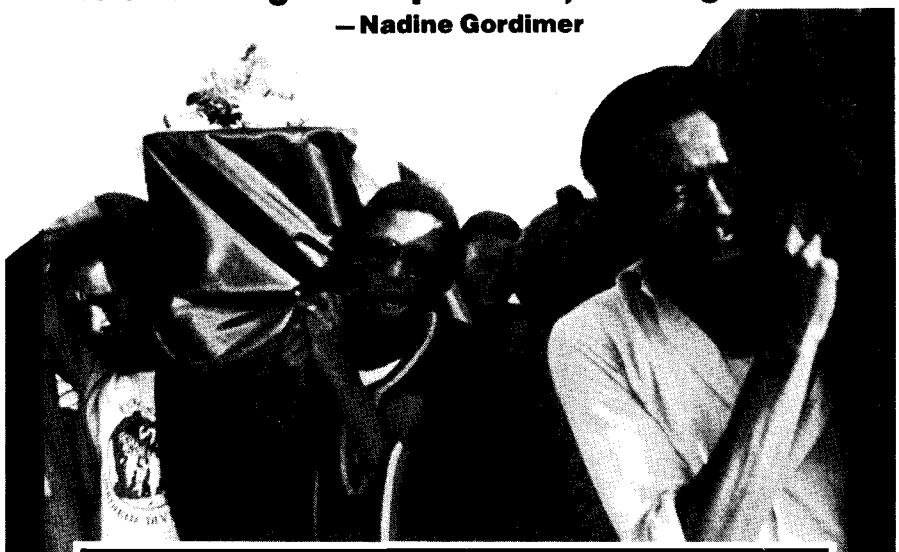

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the medieval pope Bonifacio VIII, the inventor of the temporal power of the Church and a vicious sadist who nailed monks by their tongues to city doors. Finally, he turns his attention to the modern Church with a skit featuring John Paul II, a pope with a passion for kissing babies, not to mention the ground of every country he visits—which concludes with an irreverent reenactment of his attempted assassination.

Fo sprinkles all this with pseudo-scholarly asides about the origin of capitalism, the relationship between Elizabethan English and the language of a state he calls "South Virginia," and the stereotypical American notion of Italians as skirt-chasers with beards, sideburns, and black and white shoes. What drives this comedy is not just amusement over the absurdity of life, but a profound political and religious outrage. Fo is equally indebted to Karl and Groucho Marx, which is to say, to political radicalism and comic anarchism. He is not only a one-man show but, however collective his hidden agenda, a one-man revolution—the revolution of the individual against institutions, of common sense against official piety, of the body against the soul. Represented previously in New York only by a weak production of his play, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, periodically barred by the State Department on suspicion of heresy and subversion, Dario Fo has now burst onto our shores in all his gargantuan glory, and neither comedy nor politics will ever be the same. The genie is out of the bottle; the release is liberating us all.

THANKS FOR THE MEMORY

Brothers in Arms: A Journey from War to Peace by William Broyles Jr.

(Knopf, 284 pp., $17.95)

William Broyles Jr. went to Vietnam in 1969 as a Marine lieutenant who opposed the war, but felt a vague patriotic duty to serve. He spent six months at the front near Da Nang, six months in the rear. He saw terrible things. One day, for instance, his platoon helped evacuate, for the people's own good of course, the hamlet of Phu Lac 6. The villagers were loaded into CH-46 helicopters. An old man was pushed aboard, leading his water buffalo by a ring in the animal's nose.

> As the helicopter climbed into the sky, the water buffalo panicked and ran out the opening in the rear. There was a moment of silence, cries of "I don't believe that!" from the door gunners, and then the old man got up and walked out the back after the buffalo, his body tumbling through the blue sky.

His service completed, Broyles went home to demonstrate, still from a patriotic point of view, against the war. He took up a career in journalism that led to the editorship of *Newsweek*. Then he gave up his job and returned to Vietnam for a monthlong tour. He visited Hanoi and went barhopping with Western diplomats. He flew south to Da Nang and gazed at the fishermen and at old women gathering seaweed on China Beach, where once there were thousands of Americans. He visited Ben Tre, the town that was destroyed in order to be saved, and My Lai, which was merely destroyed. He went to Saigon and looked at the old honky-tonk Tu Do Street.

Along the way he talked to several sorts of Vietnamese, the conversations translated by his government guide. There were hard-line communists, veterans from the very zones in which he fought, men who might have shot at him. He spoke to a war widow whose husband could well have been killed by Broyles's platoon. He also met soldiers in the north who told him, "America Number One! Russia Number Ten!" and a woman in Da Nang who said in English that the people still like the Americans—then hurried away in fear.

One month makes a pretty short tour, especially when the government arranges the itinerary and does the translating. The larger observations Broyles offers about Vietnamese society—the popular acceptance of communism he sees in the north, the restiveness in the south—are the sort that might well be wildly wrong, for all we know. But a portrait of the country wasn't his main purpose. He wanted to fill out his own memory of the war, to peek around corners he could never peek around during his service, also to trace a few bullets. This he was able to do.

At Da Nang, he remembered from years ago a Buddhist shrine that Americans used to avoid, so as not to offend the religious Vietnamese. This time he learned the shrine was actually a secret Viet Cong hospital. He remembered Vietnamese coming up and saying, "GI Number One." This time he met a Viet Cong veteran who confessed to doing that. The trickiness of the enemy, his strong roots in the terrain, his staunchness—all this struck Broyles anew.

The bullets he traces mostly hit famous targets. At Tu Do hospital in Saigon, he talked to doctors who told him they had delivered 13 Siamese twins out of 15,000 births, which they blamed on Agent Orange. Scrupulously Broyles adds that some doctors in the West dispute these claims and maintain that nothing has been proved. At Bach Mai hospital in Hanoi, doctors told him about the Christmas bombing of 1972, which hit the hospital. Broyles suggests that the bombing persuaded the North Vietnamese to negotiate—but in this instance fails to add that some observers believe the bombing accomplished nothing at all, except to kill a lot of Vietnamese.

He spoke to victims about whom there is no controversy. He looked up a young woman who survived My Lai. She recalls that 504 people, including 35 of her relatives, were killed. She was nine years old when the Americans struck. The most famous victim Broyles met, perhaps the best-known victim of the war, was the little girl, now a young woman, who appeared on the cover of *Life* running naked from a napalm attack. The young woman tells him she wishes she could wear a short-sleeve shirt, which of course she cannot.

These encounters of Broyles's exert a definite power. You read them, and if you have any compassion at all you feel again two of the main emotions evoked by the war. The first is horror. All wars arouse horror, of course, but I think not in the particular way Vietnam does. It was because of the disproportion between our side and theirs—the disproportion in technology and wealth, but above all in emotion. For the Americans felt, as a nation, almost none of the sen-

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timents appropriate to war, none of the hatred or frenzy or fear, precious little of the idealism. We didn't even think of ourselves experiencing, Broyles reminds us, pain and suffering on a national scale. The class composition of the American Army—Broyles's platoon consisted largely of teenage high school dropouts—confined the bad news to parts of the population least able to communicate their distress.

What made Vietnam different from other wars wasn't that Americans could watch it every night on television, but that *only* through television could most of us feel we were at war. And this lack of emotional engagement, lack of passion, lack of pain, this heartlessness, in a word, seen against the ghastly television images or against the faces and voices that Broyles records, was something monstrous. One recoiled from it. One recoils from the sight of it in Broyles's pages.

THE SECOND feeling he evokes is a peculiar sympathy for the enemy. This feeling has several aspects. His own version is a veteran's. The Viet Cong and North Vietnamese by and large fought harder than the Americans, suffered more, lasted longer. Broyles thinks they went to greater pains to retrieve their wounded. This sort of thing can't help arousing a measure of soldierly admiration, no matter what other feelings, for instance soldierly hatred, might also exist. Admiration apart, an old soldier like Broyles is bound to feel a good deal in common with veterans on the other side. He milks this feeling for all it's worth, grandiloquently beginning with his title, *Brothers in Arms*, and ending with his last line, "We had tried to kill each other, but we were brothers now." Of course the sentiment is reasonable enough, and I'm sure arises in the aftermath of almost all wars. It wasn't surprising to discover during the Bitburg affair, for instance, that American and German veterans of World War II had been holding reunions for years.

During the Vietnam War, though, sympathy for the enemy went beyond simple soldierly fraternity. Vietnam was, in fact, the only foreign war in American history that saw noticeable numbers of Americans publicly cheering the other side. Broyles never did this nor could have, given his time at the front and what he knew about Viet Cong atrocities. Still, the reason some people felt an active sympathy is plain enough in his book. It was because of that same disproportion. You see it when Broyles tours Hanoi and looks at a downed U.S. bomber in a museum and another one stuck like a giant fin in a lake.

He reminds us that the United States undertook the bombing of North Vietnam as a calculated policy not intended to slaughter civilians. He reminds us that many were killed anyway, that life was made a hell for the North Vietnamese, that the victims were almost helpless against it. Recalling all that, you can hardly look at those downed planes, at those few souvenirs of North Vietnamese success in defending themselves, without feeling tempted to say of the enemy gunners, good for them. Their successes evoke the anticolonial struggle at its most heroic. It is bitter to say that, but it isn't wrong.

How much better it would have been if American supporters of the enemy had been able to feel these sentiments and still remember something about communist history, had been able to distinguish between human solidarity for people on the other side and political solidarity for the movement that was surely going to betray those people as soon as it had won. Large political errors could have been avoided. But those errors still don't impugn the initial instinct to feel a human solidarity. The analogy with Afghanistan makes this clear. One might well look at the Afghan rebels and shudder knowledgeably at the role of Islamic fundamentalism in their lives, and predict the worst sort of religious totalitarianism if the rebel cause prevails—and one might still admire these people for as long as the Soviets remain at war. One can hardly feel otherwise, in fact.

Broyles's own views on communism are entirely hostile, perhaps without being entirely clear. He is one of those Americans who gaze upon communism as upon Pluto, vainly trying to imagine its terrain by picturing down-home objects that any prairie ignoramus can recognize, next reminding himself that communists are an affront to human nature. Struck by the puritanism of North Vietnam, Broyles finds himself comparing communism to Moral Majority types in the United States. He even suggests that Ronald Reagan isn't so far from Vietnamese communist moralism. Then, having made the communists so familiar as to no longer be themselves, he makes

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them so strange as to no longer be anybody at all. He invokes what he calls "classic Marxism, the importance of mind over matter." In real life, of course, "classic Marxism" emphasizes the opposite. But Broyles is talking demonology here, not philosophy.

IT GETS pretty frustrating, reading this stuff. Broyles is good at drawing a scene. He has pluck, which gives his book its special value. He means to be serious, he has a sympathetic heart, he is unquestionably brave. But his mind can't help flowing into a sort of Mekong delta of received opinions, which he pictures as his own thoughts. "This book," he says at the start, "is the story of a journey in search of some basic truths about war and peace, and why love and laughter thrive so near to death." Basic truths accordingly gush up on command.

He inspects the countryside: Third World wisdom assails him. "All around us was a different world, revolving around the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, always repeated, seldom changing, the harvest of life deeply rooted in the harvest of rice." He inspects the war. He finds beauty in it, in spite of death. He finds love and comradeship. Yes, and he stands amazed at his courage in unearthing these basic truths, and he seems never to suspect that readers may feel they've been here before.

Reading William Broyles, in short, you find the world of the glossy newsweeklies, revolving around the cycle of well-honed prose, cheap profundity, and well-honed prose, always repeated, seldom changing, the harvest of wisdom rooted in the harvest of formula publishing. Of course the newsweeklies do report events that actually happen, and therefore those magazines ought to be read, in spite of everything; and the same can be said of *Brothers in Arms*. Back of the received ideas is a war, and Broyles has enough genuine talent to let that war slip onto the page often enough, and the sight of it does make you think, and even weep, so long as you don't allow yourself to get too irritated with the author.

An additional point. Broyles found himself at a lot of parties during his monthlong tour, often at clubs and restaurants that were fantastically expensive for his Vietnamese hosts. There were offers of prostitution. Western journalists stumble across these things all the time in poor countries, which is natural, given that the journalists are lonely, glamorous, and, according to the exchange rate, zillionaires. Broyles recalls that hot times, especially the availability of women, were also part of the war, on the American side. When his platoon was at the front, women cost five dollars each. He recalls a South Vietnamese officers' club in Saigon where when you sat down, a woman turned out to be under the table.

You get the impression in one passage that suppressing prostitution is one of the things he holds against the communists. He was sitting in a Hanoi cafe. There were soldiers, he was approached by a prostitute, and then the soldiers cheered, "America Number One!" Attaway, boys, Broyles seems to say.

> Hanoi appeared to be regimented, puritan, alien, the Marxist triumph of idea over matter. And it was. But something else was struggling to emerge from the tight cocoon of ideology and self-denial. It was something modern, something Western. And it was something I, as an American, stood for.

He can get pretty foolish, Broyles can. But it was hardy of him to broach sexual topics at all, and if for once he comes up without a basic truth, that only suggests that a semi-large field of inquiry awaits its historian. Someone should write the sexual history of the Vietnam War. Let that historian begin with a glance at *Brothers in Arms*.

PAUL BERMAN

Paul Berman writes for the *Village Voice*.

THE LIMITS OF LANGUAGE

The Resistance to Theory
by Paul de Man
foreword by Wlad Godzich

(University of Minnesota Press, 160 pp., $25, $10.95 paper)

The Lesson of Paul de Man
Yale French Studies, 69
edited by Peter Brooks, Shoshana Felman, and J. Hillis Miller

(Yale University Press, 333 pp., $12.95)

I have been reading *The Lesson of Paul de Man* and having a difficulty with it. The title is clearly an allusion to Henry James's story "The Lesson of the Master," and to the force of authority that issues from a particularly powerful mind. The three editors speak not only of the lesson but of the legacy of Paul de Man, and one of them, J. Hillis Miller, refers to "the extraordinary intellectual authority" de Man exerted on his friends and colleagues. Some critics exert authority by not seeking it. Indeed, one of de Man's pupils, Barbara Johnson, says that when one gave him an essay or a chapter of a thesis to read, "he would respond as Melville describes Billy Budd responding to the chaplain's benediction: 'He received, but did not appropriate. It was like a gift placed in the palm of an outreached hand upon which the fingers do not close.' " I believe her. But I find it difficult to relate this critical and pedagogical authority to de Man's writings, which are always concerned to undermine whatever authority a writer's language appears to claim. It is possible, of course, that de Man's authority was entirely personal, the force of personality that Weber called "charisma," "a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with . . . exceptional powers or qualities."

The Lesson of Paul de Man begins with ten tributes to him—by J. Hillis Miller, Peter Brooks, A. Bartlett Giamatti, Geoffrey Hartman, Shoshana Felman, Barbara Johnson, E. S. Burt, Andrzej Warminski, Jacques Derrida, and Yves Bonnefoy—as

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spoken at a memorial service held in his honor on January 18, 1984. The book also includes several essays directly or indirectly acknowledging de Man's influence.

The University of Minnesota Press, moreover, is bringing out three volumes of de Man's essays. The first volume, *The Resistance to Theory*, consists of six essays on literary theory that de Man published in the last three years of a remarkably productive life. Readers of de Man's *Blindness and Insight* (1971, 1983), *Allegories of Reading* (1979), and *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (1984) will find in *The Resistance to Theory* little that is especially new. Instead it offers nuanced variations on his most influential themes—the duplicity of language, and the bad faith of interpretations based on the assumption that the apparent relation between language and world is authentic.

I CAN'T speak of Paul de Man in any personal sense. I met him only two or three times. When I prepared a documentary program for BBC Radio 3 on Structuralism and Post-Structuralism, I invited him to take part, and he was splendidly clear and unpretentious in discussing problems of language and meaning. And I know little of his background in Europe. His native language was Flemish, and in his early intellectual life he moved easily between French, German, and English. When I met him in Zurich, we talked mostly about Yeats. For several years Rousseau was the center of his scholarly meditation. Most of the questions de Man raised were provoked by his intricate moves between Rousseau and the high literature of European Romanticism. His Harvard dissertation in 1960 was a study of Mallarmé, Yeats, and "the Post-Romantic Predicament." But he was not disposed to establish boundaries between works conventionally designated as literature, philosophy, and criticism. It seemed just as urgent to read Heidegger as Hölderin, Kant as Baudelaire. Over a period of several years, de Man wrote essays on Hegel, Kant, Nietzsche, Rilke, Yeats, Proust, Wordsworth, Shelley, and many other writers.

Gifted in close reading and practical criticism, de Man did most of his thinking by encountering the writings of others. As he became preoccupied with literary theory, he brooded over theoretical questions raised by his readings in Sartre, Derrida, Poulet, Lukacs, and Blanchot. Indeed, it is still a question whether there is much in de Man's theory that is not already in Derrida's or Blanchot's. Deconstruction, as a form or style of writing, was Derrida's invention, but it was de Man who brought it into seminar rooms and showed students of comparative literature what it could do. It was still a technique of close and slow reading, and it retained some connection with the teaching practices de Man learned when he worked with Reuben Brower at Harvard.

But Brower's books don't show any of the misgiving, culminating in skepticism, that increasingly appeared in de Man's essays over the years. Close reading dismayed into skepticism and then endured as if it were man's fate: that is as close as I can come to a description of de Man's stance in his essays and books. He was never as playful as Derrida, though I've always found something sinister in Derrida's game, as in many practical jokes. De Man didn't resort, as a matter of habit, to Derrida's puns, his opportunistic etymologies, or indeed to Blanchot's heuristic repetitions. Besides, these games are more plausible in French than in English.

The form of writing that suited de Man best was the fairly long essay. It gave him just enough space to analyze passages chosen for the occasion and to ponder some of the theoretical problems the analysis disclosed. It also allowed him to deem some of the problems insoluble, and to regard them as predicaments to be borne. He was not tentative, but he always knew a stalemate when he arrived at it.

FOR THE past ten years or so, de Man has been regarded as the supreme master of Deconstruction in its American form. He shared with Structuralists the determination to make the psychological understanding of action ashamed of itself. There must be no talk of self, identity, mind, imagination, or will: those are sentimentalities, tokens of an axiomatic humanism. Whatever has been construed by recourse to history, psychology, psychoanalysis, and other social sciences must be transferred to semiotic analysis. De Man's sense of the limitations of Structuralism was not as specific as Derrida's. It was Derrida who diagnosed in Structuralism's concern for codes and systems a blatant nostalgia, a yearning for paternal authority and stability.

But it was de Man who prescribed, even more insistently than Derrida, the stance Deconstruction should take. It should present itself as a form of reading designed to show that the statements in a text necessarily give themselves away: whatever authority they claim is specious. Every text, according to de Man, is to be "put in motion, de-canonized, questioned in a way which undoes its claim to canonical authority." Locke's attack on the delusiveness of rhetorical

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figures, in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, is disabled by the fact that he has to resort to such figures in making it. He can't be in control of "the rhetorical motions of his own text." Kant's distinction between schematic and symbolic representations, in *The Critique of Judgment*, can't hold "because the language in which it is stated reintroduces the elements of indetermination it sets out to eliminate."

The particular mark of literary as distinct from mundane language, according to de Man, is that the former knows its doom and the latter doesn't. Literature, de Man says in *Blindness and Insight*, is "the only form of language free from the fallacy of unmediated expression." Journalists may be foolish enough to believe that sign and meaning can be coaxed to coincide, but "the language" knows that it's impossible. It follows from the "rhetorical nature of literary language that the cognitive function resides in the language and not in the subject." Instead of bewildering ourselves with talk of the creative imagination or the defensive strategies of will, we should see a necessarily reified entity called Language producing itself in the form of rhetorical figures—tropes, for short. If the question of feeling and passion arises, the text to consult is the last chapter of *Allegories of Reading*, where de Man looks, with obvious favor, upon the possibility that "the entire construction of drives, substitutions, repressions, and representations is the aberrant, metaphorical correlative of the absolute randomness of language, prior to any figuration or meaning."

TAKE for instance the figure of prosopopoeia, which de Man regarded as "the master trope of poetic discourse." It is the trope in which Language "makes accessible to the senses, in this case the ear, a voice which is out of earshot because it is no longer alive." It designates "the very process of figuration as giving face to what is devoid of it." The trope is especially active in lyric and autobiographical writing.

Now suppose I were to say to Jacques Derrida, on the provisional authority of the words attributed to him in *The Lesson of Paul de Man*:

> I presume you think, Monsieur Derrida, that on January 18, 1984, in New Haven, you spoke from a grieving heart about your dead friend Paul de Man. You called upon your powers of memory and eloquence to help you to testify to that grief. You recalled richly humane episodes—the night with de Man and your son Pierre after the jazz session; Paul's voice—and in the end, your grief too much to bear or to express, you broke off with a cry of despair and waste and pain: "*devant vous, qui me pardonnerez de le faire si mal à l'instant ou déjà tout fait mal, si mal.*" (Or in the English you couldn't bring yourself to speak on that occasion: "How was I to know that one day I would speak of that moment, that music, and that soul without him, before you who must forgive me for doing it just now so poorly, so painfully, when already everything is painful, so painful?")
>
> Nonsense. You delude yourself; you are mystifying the case. What happened on January 18, 1984, was that Language produced itself in the form not only of one prosopopoeia, but of ten. What your bourgeois liberalism invites you to call your grief was merely an accessory after the fact of a prosopopoeia. The cognitions that *The Lesson of Paul de Man* ascribes to you are merely functions of Language.

I risk this sordidness to show the kind of discourse that would follow from taking de Man's Deconstruction as strictly as it asks to be taken. Even in its own terms, it is fallacious. Prosopopoeia is the name rhetoricians give to a category of gestures, to a genre, and not to any particular gesture. If you say that a particular work is an epic or a lyric or a sonnet, you name the category in which it is to be thought of. The only merit in saying that *Hamlet* is a tragedy is that you indicate the kind of thing it is and the kind of discourse it may reasonably be expected to attract. But you haven't distinguished between *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. A reference to prosopopoeia doesn't distinguish between Derrida's memorial speech and any of the other nine. Besides, prosopopoeia is a capacity of language; it is merely held in silent abeyance or *in potentia* till Derrida, Hillis Miller, or some other mourner activates it in a particular way. Language is not a machine that "acts" randomly, although de Man often chose to say it was.

I HAVE remarked that de Man was a close reader. But he never opened himself to a text or took risks in its presence. It was as if he insisted on knowing in advance how the reading would go. His commentary on the "Boy of Winander" section of *The Prelude* is intended, clearly in advance, to undermine Wordsworth's belief that man and nature are

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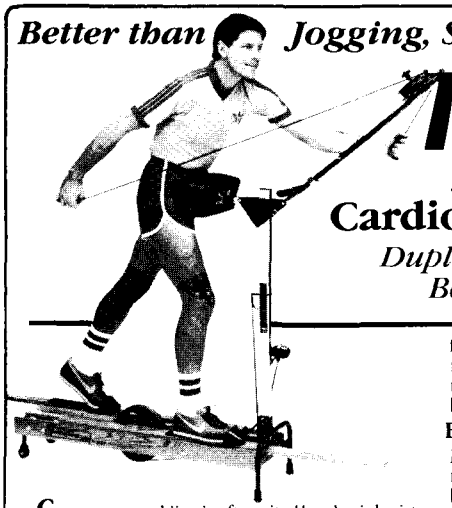

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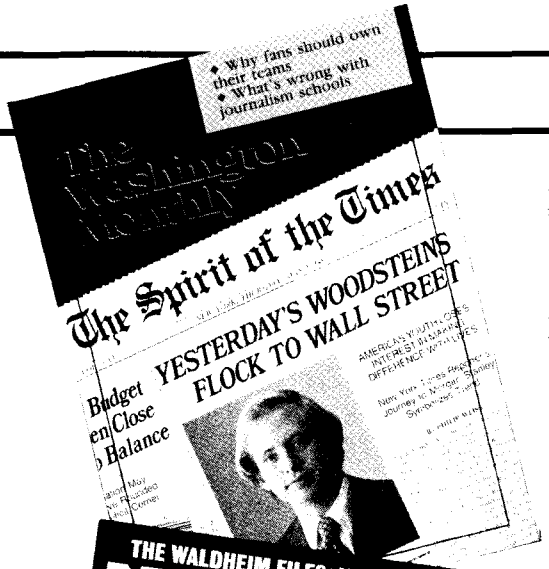

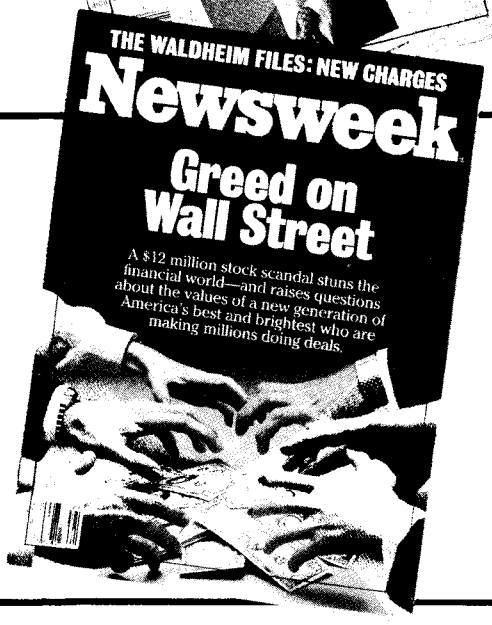
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"essentially adapted to each other." Quoting a passage that seems to be in keeping with this sense of analogy between nature and mind, de Man asks us to sense "how another dimension opens up and replaces this illusory analogy." Why the second dimension is less illusory than the first, de Man doesn't say:

> For when, in the continuation of the poem, the voice of the birds becomes silent and that of the mountain streams takes its place, the reassuring stability of the beginning disappears and gives way to the precarious adjective "uncertain" that is added to the key word "Heaven":
>
> . . . the visible scene
> Would enter unawares into his mind
> With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
> Its woods, and that uncertain Heaven, receiv'd
> Into the bosom of the steady lake.

De Man refers to "this tone of uncertainty." But where is it? That uncertain Heaven is such for no metaphysical reason, and certainly not because Wordsworth suddenly doubts the mutuality of nature and mind; but because the sky appears only as shadows upon the steady surface of the lake. De Man's reading, in this case, seems to me perverse. It is like watching a champion ice skater skating with every appearance of authority around the rink; but you're waiting for him to fall and to show that the real truth of his skating is the fall, not the authoritative action when he doesn't fall.

Sometimes the merit of de Man's close reading is that it induces a scruple where there has been nothing but conviction. I have never been persuaded by his interpretation of the last lines of Yeats's "Among School Children":

> O chestnut-tree, great-rooted blossomer,
> Are you the leaf, the blossom or the bole?
> O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
> How can we know the dancer from the dance?

In *Allegories of Reading*, and again in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism*, de Man looks at the usual reading of these lines, which interprets them as Yeats's exultant assertion, by way of the rhetorical question at the end, that Unity of Being is indeed possible. But for once de Man chooses to take the question literally: in that case, he says, it "could just as well express the bewilderment of someone who, faced with two different possibilities, does not know what choice to make." This literalist reading seems to me so alien to the tone of the entire last stanza that I can't believe de Man ever listened to the Yeatsian music. The fact that within a few pages he misquotes the questioning line as "How can we tell the dancer from the dance?" shows that he hasn't really read it. Still, the entire essay on Yeats in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* makes me hesitate, even in the interpretation of poems I feel I know pretty well.

I DON'T know when de Man started thinking of his work as Deconstruction. It can't have been before 1967, when Derrida published *La Voix et le phénomène*, *L'écriture et la différence*, and *De la grammatologie*. But de Man was ready for Deconstruction even before it was ready for him. "Image and Emblem in Yeats," the long chapter of his Harvard dissertation which he published in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism*, shows that he was already slouching toward New Haven. On the fragile basis of Yeats's early poems, de Man sees Yeats as veering between two quite different epistemologies. The first is predicated upon Romanticism and French Symbolism, its vehicle is the image or symbol, its burden is desire, and it assigns ontological priority to the natural world. According to that sense of life, language acts as a mediator between mind and matter "because it partakes of both."

The second epistemology is predicated upon the emblem, which finds its meaning in poetic tradition and not in the nature which Yeats now hates. Nature appears as "the brutal strength of matter, a bestial violence which can only find expression in images of blood and torment." Language is the vessel of divine intellect—that is why "Words alone are certain good"—and its true custodian is one or another version of Platonism. What Yeats's later poems testify to is the defeat of emblem by image, of supernatural by natural force, of spiritual love by natural desire.

It is a commonplace that writers from Kant, Goethe, and Coleridge to Yeats and Eliot set their minds astir upon notions of symbol and allegory. Usually they valued symbol over allegory because symbols held out a promise of organic unity—Unity of Being, in Yeats's phrase—and allegory was merely an instrument for conveying a moral lesson. Among the many things Coleridge said about symbol, the most tangible is that it is characterized by "the translucence of the Eternal through and in the Temporal" and that "while it enunciates the whole, it abides itself as a living part in that Unity, of which it is the representative." Allegory, a lesser thing, is "but a translation of abstract notions into a picture-language which is itself nothing but an abstraction from objects of the senses."

This distinction, or something like it, remained in force till certain writers began to feel that the sought-after unity, organic or otherwise, was specious. In *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, Walter Benjamin valued allegory over symbol because allegory didn't pretend to posit the unity of things and meanings. "Allegories are in the realm of thoughts what ruins are in the realm of things"; and morally the better for being ruins. Symbols tell lies, because they "show the face of Nature in the light of salvation." Allegories tell truth, because they express, under the sign of Saturn, the appalling spectacle of historical life, the abyss between meretricious forms and defeated meanings. They show history as a death's head—earthbound, unglowing.

De Man was of Benjamin's party in this characterization. Why *Allegories of Reading*? Because the book insisted that there is always a rift, a fissure, between words and the reality we naively think they denote. The web is never intact. De Man liked to quote Benjamin's definition of allegory as a void that "signifies precisely the non-being of what it represents." The true aim of reading is to disclose the void, to report absence where presence has been claimed.

MANY OF de Man's pupils and colleagues have claimed that Deconstruction must be viewed as a threat to the academy. Why else has it provoked such opposition? But they shouldn't assume that fear is the sole reason for attacking something. If I rebuke de Man for misquoting Yeats, it is not because I fear his influence. It is, rather, because I think a teacher should, when it is possible, get things right. I don't feel threatened by Deconstruction. I oppose it because I think it's a scare-story. It sets up a straw reader and then claims that he is deluded by a "metaphysics of presence" into thinking that language can make something present. But who has ever thought it could, or lost sleep over its failure? There is always, in reading, an "as if." We can talk about Isabel Archer without thinking that she "exists" or ever existed outside the pages of *Portrait of a Lady*. When we talk about Isabel and Gilbert we aren't deluding ourselves, we're using shorthand; a metaphysics of presence isn't entailed.

I don't think Western civilization (or

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any other) is in danger from Deconstruction. De Man's interest in what he called "the epistemological thrust of the rhetorical dimensions of discourse" is not something from which children have to be protected. Besides, I note that in *The Resistance to Theory* de Man offers a program I could easily live with: "Literature, instead of being taught only as a historical and humanistic subject, should be taught as a rhetoric and a poetics prior to being taught as a hermeneutics and a history." Paul Ricoeur provided a model for this peacemaking exercise some years ago, by suggesting that Structuralism and Hermeneutics need not quarrel: let S. go to work first and H. later. Their joint activities would amount to a complete program of reading. But Ricoeur was ready to make peace in those terms because he regarded Structuralism as merely a partial, indeed rather limited, program. It could contribute its tuppenceworth and move aside. Rhetoric, for de Man, is a totalizing project; it prescribes a course which must be followed even when the pedagogy takes different names.

I concede that one passage in *The Resistance to Theory* describes the relation between poetics and hermeneutics in fairly genial terms:

> If . . . on noting that Homer refers to Achilles as a lion, I conclude that Achilles is courageous, this is a hermeneutic decision; if, on the other hand, I examine, with Aristotle, whether Homer is using a simile or a metaphor, this is a consideration in the sphere of poetics.

Is that it? It sounds agreeable. If I want to go from Homer's words to courage, I work in hermeneutics. If I want to talk about metaphor, I stay with poetics. But I suspect that de Man would want to kidnap poetics for Deconstruction, and define a deconstructive program in terms that would make it impossible for hermeneuts and historians to live. A deconstructive hermeneutics is probably a contradiction in those terms. Certainly I don't know of anyone who has attempted such a thing. I distrust the Flemish bearing gifts.

De Man also says, as if one offering of gifts weren't enough, that the reader "has to have 'read' the text in terms of poetics to arrive at a hermeneutic conclusion . . . but one also has to read it hermeneutically to 'understand' it as poetics: one has to acknowledge Achilles's courage as well as his humanity to notice that something occurs in the language that does not normally occur in the natural or social world, that a lion can be substituted for a man." I don't recall ever thinking that something had to occur in nature or the social world before it could occur in language. But no matter. If we add to de Man's program a vision of lions lying down with lambs, I am content, I suppose.

DENIS DONOGHUE

Denis Donoghue's new book, *We Irish: Essays on Irish Literature and Society*, will be published by Knopf this fall.

HISTORY IN HIGH PLACES

Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers by Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May

(The Free Press, 329 pp., $19.95)

History is bunk, Henry Ford said. And even if it isn't, the only thing we ever learn from history is that we never learn, or so Hegel believed. Judging from Richard E. Neustadt's and Ernest R. May's book, American public officials largely behave as if either Ford or Hegel were right. Neustadt and May, one a professor of public administration and the other a professor of history at Harvard University, describe America's public servants as often ignorant of the past and quick to make decisions without reference to it. Moreover, when they do rely on history, they usually misuse it, invoking false analogies and ignoring more appropriate ones to make unwise decisions that affect all of our lives.

Many of America's highest placed officials in the 20th century have known astonishingly little about the culture, geography, and history of either their own or other countries. When the future secretary of state William Jennings Bryan visited Constantinople in 1906, he impressed his hosts in the American Embassy as having only the barest acquaintance with anything other than "American political psychology." Seeing Bryan off at the station, a diplomat remarked that he would have an interesting trip through the Balkans. "What are the Balkans?" asked the man who would be responsible for American diplomacy for more than two years.

"To hell with Europe and the rest of those nations," Minnesota's Senator Thomas Schall said in 1935. When American forces entered South Korea in 1945, they were so ignorant of the long-standing Korean hatred of Japan that they left Japanese occupiers in administrative posts while they tried to arrange for a new governing authority. And as Frances Fitzgerald showed in *Fire in the Lake*, our ignorance and indifference to Vietnam's history and culture doomed our involvement in that country from the start. Still, when it comes to historical understanding, the current occupant of the White House makes many of his predecessors look good. On a trip to Latin America early in his presidency, Ronald Reagan marveled that his host countries were different from one another. He has also described the New Deal as fascist, and depicted "freedom fighters" in Afghanistan, Angola, and Nicaragua as natural heirs of America's Founding Fathers.

NEUSTADT AND May expand the list of "horror stories," as they call mistaken decisions in which the imaginative (or even accurate) use of history was glaringly absent. Limiting themselves mostly to examples from the last four decades, they point to Truman's failed attempt to unite all of Korea, to Kennedy's fiasco in the Bay of Pigs, to Johnson's misadventures in Vietnam, to Ford's actions to protect the country from a swine flu epidemic that never came, to Carter's abortive attempt to achieve deep cuts in Soviet and American strategic nuclear forces, and to Reagan's initial failure to achieve Social Security reform. All of these are cases in which "the individuals who made the key decisions, or at least some of them, looked back and asked, 'How in God's name did we come to do *that*?'" Neustadt and May reply: through excessively hasty action, reliance on "fuzzy analogies," ignorance of an issue's history, unthinking acceptance

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of "key presumptions," untested stereotypes about persons and organizations involved in the decision, and little or no effort to see other choices.

Would a greater knowledge of history, and a more judicious use of it, have led recent presidents and their advisers to wiser actions? Neustadt and May think so, though they readily acknowledge that the improvement in performance might only be modest or "marginal." But even such limited gains are worth pursuing. And to that end, they outline steps that officials might follow in order to make wiser public policies. Evolving out of a course called "Uses of History," taught at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government since the 1970s, the techniques Neustadt and May propose have received high marks from their students: senior officials—legislators, bureau chiefs, military officers, and diplomats—sent back to school to train for higher assignments. The methods they suggest, Neustadt and May admit, "have no magic, but most people who try them find that they work."

HOW DO Neustadt and May make their students more effective decision makers by "thinking in time"? They teach by example. Take the Truman administration's decision in September 1950 to cross the 38th parallel in Korea, where it hoped to destroy the regime in Pyongyang and bring the whole country under a noncommunist government. The initial decision in June 1950 to enter the Korean fighting drew on the experience of the 1930s: how the failure of the democracies to halt aggression in Manchuria, Ethiopia, and Austria emboldened the fascists and led to a world war. The analogues from the thirties may have been fine for persuading Truman to maintain the *status quo ante* in Korea, but they hardly justified the attempt to conquer the whole country. In making this decision, Truman and his advisers failed to "ask *why* the analogues of the 1930s came so irresistibly to mind," and what "lesson" they actually taught.

More specifically, the decision makers needed to ask themselves a series of questions about the issue facing them. What do we know? What is unclear? What is presumed? What are the similarities and differences between the current concern and the historical analogues being invoked? And how did the specific issue at hand arise? Had the Truman administration followed this procedure when it began its deliberations on Korea, it would have seen how little need there was for crossing the parallel, or how well a restoration of the *status quo ante* would have served its purposes. More precisely, had the administration thought matters through more systematically, it would have recognized that the objective was not to destroy the adversary, but rather to enforce a system of collective security constructed to prevent aggression.

Analogies come in different forms, as Neustadt and May point out. Some are irresistible, some only captivating, and some merely seductive or "so familiar that attachment develops unnoticed." Yet all need to be subjected to the same careful scrutiny, the same comparison of similarities and differences between "now" and "then." So, too, with analogues decision makers cannot ignore, but do not wish to use. The unwillingness of Lyndon Johnson and his advisers to pay close attention to the French defeat in Indochina when deciding to Americanize the war in Vietnam is a case in point.

The Johnson administration did produce a memorandum called "France in Vietnam, 1954, and the U.S. in Vietnam, 1965—A Useful Analogy?" But the document was not taken seriously. For obvious reasons, it emphasized the differences rather than the similarities, and it was used for advocacy rather than analysis—to fend off critics of Americanization, rather than to consider carefully whether France's experience should have given the United States greater pause. Had the memorandum been for analysis, it would have taken the story back to 1950 or 1951, and taken account of how the Vietnamese communists had "outlasted and worn down the French," a nation with a larger, longer-term stake in Vietnam than the United States. A greater attention to the French analogy may not have been enough to keep Johnson from escalating the war in Vietnam, but it might have encouraged him to include a way out of Vietnam in his policy: the creation of a regime in Saigon that would have called for neutralization and American withdrawal.

BY contrast with some of his successors, Franklin Roosevelt was able to create an enduring old-age insurance system partly because he had a keen sense of America's history, and its collective memory. He recognized that by the 1930s the aged poor had become a lasting issue in American life, and that by anchoring the social security system in "insurance," he would be able to preserve it from swings in sentiment common in American politics. "Consider contrasts between FDR and LBJ," Neustadt and May also suggest. "In getting legislation through Congress without significant change, Johnson did better than Roosevelt." But with his "lesser sense of history," Johnson "lacked FDR's awareness of how hard it is in America to build something that endures the way you want it. In consequence, many of his social programs fell far short of their marks; some have not survived through the mid-1980s."

Decision makers, according to Neustadt and May, might also do well to consider the history underlying key presumptions: "the history which induces belief that, if *X* occurs, *Y* will follow." The Johnson administration, for example, believed that the pain inflicted on North Vietnam by bombing would persuade it to stop helping the Viet

SONG

And the walls came tumbling down.
And the word for wall
came tumbling down.
And the dust came to mean
that which has tumbled.

She ran from the city her
hands afire. And
where she touched
she burned. And the word
for fire came burning.

The smoke rose.
And the word for sky
became the word for smoke.
She plunged her hands
into the river. And she

burned the water. And
the water burned the banks
on either side. And
the word for burning
spread to the fields.

In the fields the wheat
burned and came tumbling
down, and tumbling up
came the smell of bread.
And the word for bread

became the word for clouds.
And the word for tumbling
down became Jericho,
Jericho. Jericho
came tumbling down.

ALAN MICHAEL PARKER

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Cong. LBJ and his advisers assumed that Hanoi would respond to pain as a person might and that past experience with strategic bombing validated this supposition. Similarly, when they considered using U.S. ground forces, they remembered American victories in past wars. They also recalled that the Korean War and other limited wars had ended not in defeat but compromise. If Johnson and his associates had bothered to examine their presumptions, they would have reminded themselves that pain does not always have the same effect on governments that it does on individuals, that strategic bombing had worked well enough against Italy and Japan during World War II, but only after changes in governments, and that it was, in fact, counterproductive against Britain and Germany, where it made the governments more stubborn. Finally, American ground forces had succeeded in all-out wars, but had fared less well when operating under self-imposed constraints. LBJ and his advisers knew all these things. Had they given them the consideration they deserved, they might have been more realistic about what they were up against in Vietnam.

BUT IS it conceivable that decision makers can be persuaded to act as rationally as Neustadt and May propose? In a century that has given us two world wars, unprecedented acts of government-sponsored genocide, and nuclear arsenals poised to incinerate the planet, is it realistic to have such faith in reason? Neustadt's and May's approach will be more compelling to political scientists than to historians. For the latter there is something too rational and too neat about what the authors call their "mini-methods." Can people govern by a formula, a set of questions, or a procedure meant to result in the most constructive possible decisions? Political scientists like to think so. Historians, however, must be skeptical. Without question, urging decision makers to probe the history of an issue and ask the kinds of searching questions Neustadt and May suggest seems like a good idea. But can decision making really be made into a science? As every historian knows, human affairs are painfully irrational and inexact. Most attempts to subject them to such controls end poorly. Witness the Schlieffen plan in World War I, the Soviet Five-Year Plans, and the American application of the strategic hamlet program in Vietnam—all striking failures. And the list, obviously, could be almost infinitely lengthened.

Is there, then, any significant value in what Neustadt and May propose? Most historians would surely answer "yes." Generally, they see the application of reason to human affairs, efforts to plan and master the uncertainties of human interactions, as the very stuff of government, and history—the knowledge of what came before—as an indispensable tool in governing wisely. How otherwise, they would observe, did the American Constitution, the most successful instrument of government ever devised, get written, if not by historically informed human reason? Rather than toss aside Neustadt's and May's plan for improving decision making, the historian would suggest that it be seen as a tool with a limited value.

Somewhere between the instrumentalism of Neustadt and May, and George Kennan's observation that a "Higher Authority" presides over the results of historians' labors, lies the historian's conviction that successful government leaders may make effective use of history: not by conscious, systematic design, but by a general knowledge of how the present emerged from the past and what lessons can be drawn from it. Why were Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill so much wiser than Herbert Hoover and Neville Chamberlain in seeing what was needed during the crises of the thirties and the forties? Temperament and circumstance no doubt had something to do with it. But history as well, a deep and genuine grasp of how their own and other nations had behaved before, helped them to see "hopeful roads into the future."

Neustadt and May speak to this point in the closing pages of their book. Indeed, they argue that the wisest decision makers have been those men and women with a capacity to move "from present to future to past and back." Such thinking, they assert, helped FDR envision an enduring social security system and aided George Marshall in foreseeing the restoration of Europe's economic health through the plan that bears his name. Neustadt and May have no analytic tool or set formula for explaining why FDR and Marshall did so well with history. But they are convinced that it can help leaders govern. Although such faith in history is a long way from the detailed formula they urge upon decision makers for using history, it suggests that they are comfortable with both the historians' and the political scientists' understanding of how history can serve decision makers.

Thinking in Time is a book not only for decision makers, but for everyone who cares about wise public action. It will not revolutionize the way in which the government goes about its business, but it could help put the ship of state on a less erratic course than the one it has navigated in recent years.

ROBERT DALLEK

Robert Dallek is professor of history at UCLA. He is writing a biography of Lyndon B. Johnson.

THE INTELLECTUAL AND THE STREETS

A Violent Life
by Pier Paolo Pasolini
translated by William Weaver

(Carcanet Press, 320 pp., $18.50, $7.50 paper)

Pier Paolo Pasolini, the poet, novelist, filmmaker, and cultural agitator who was murdered in 1975 at the age of 53, continues to loom over Italian life as a fierce avenging shadow. The most gifted politicized artist of his generation, Pasolini came closer than anyone else to fulfilling the prescription for cultural engagement that had been proposed by Antonio Gramsci, a founder of the Italian Communist Party whose posthumously published prison writings—part theory, part social and literary criticism—became the focal text for all of the Italian left when they appeared shortly after the war. Yet Pasolini was far from being an orthodox communist. Temperamentally an outsider, he was a Marxist

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out of intellectual conviction, a Christian in ethics and sentiment, and an outspoken homosexual in a society that glorifies machismo.

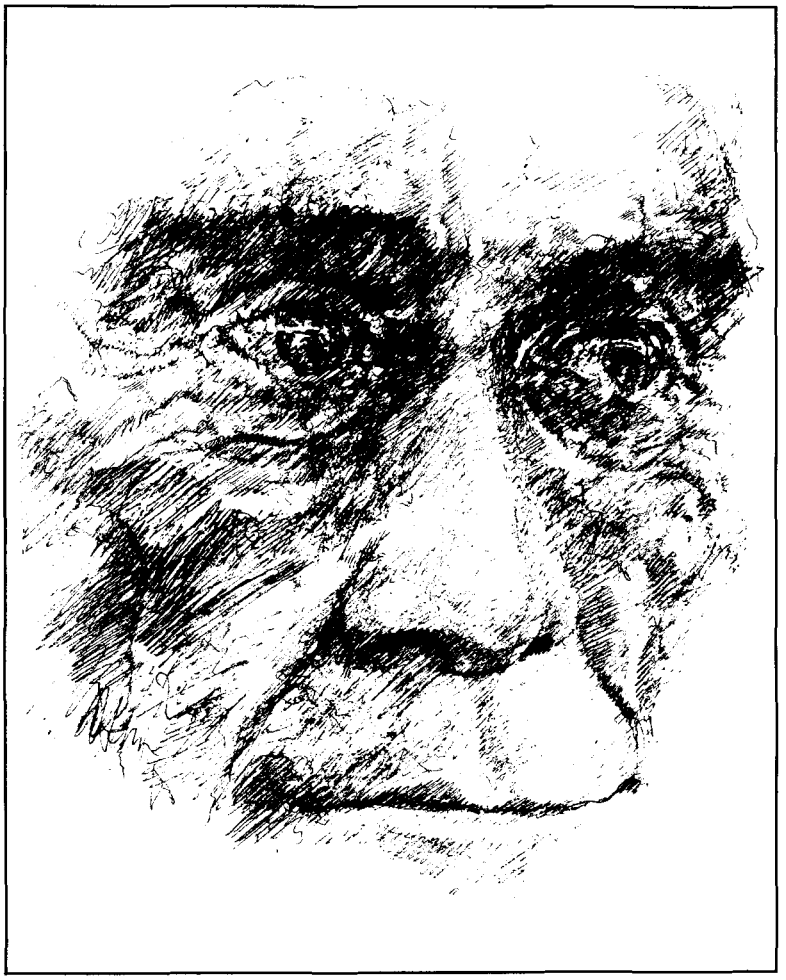
Pasolini was a figure of scandal not only because he vaunted his status as a sexual and political outsider, but because he conducted a relentless attack on the establishments of both the left and the right. He was harassed by the Italian legal system, largely unsuccessfully, throughout most of his career. His profile as an artist, to which he devoted much attention, draws on Baudelairean anomie and Rimbaudian anarchism, on the self-dramatizing of Whitman and the cultural czarism of Pound. But its central motivating myth is Christian (or pre-Christian) victimism. Pasolini came to see himself as the sacrificial lamb of a new consciousness, despised and rejected for his insistence on calling attention to the moral and intellectual contradictions both in his society and in his own nature.

Those contradictions are embodied in the "desperate passion to be in the world" that is the starting point of Pasolini's art. The phrase comes from his great early poem of 1954, "The Ashes of Gramsci," in which Pasolini invoked

> The scandal of contradicting myself, of being
> with you and against you; with you in my heart,
> in light, but against you in the dark viscera;
>
> (translated by Norman MacAfee)

For him, it was impossible to reconcile what he had learned from Gramsci and others about political reality with his own powerfully irrational attraction to the unconscious life around him. "In the heat of the instincts and aesthetic passion," in his "recidivist" love for the young men of the Roman proletariat, Pasolini knew he was at odds with the historicism he had accepted intellectually. For the lives and attitudes of the boys he was drawn to partook of, and indeed depended on, a set of beliefs and circumstances that Pasolini was committed to believing was a part of the past.

The vitality of "a proletarian life anterior to [Marxism]" was the source of his most profound personal joy; "its happiness is religion to me," he wrote. The vivid otherness of the Roman subproletarian youth, their unself-conscious naturalness and freedom of expression, represented a prelapsarian wholeness for Pasolini. He made it the stuff of his art. He portrayed their lives and their world



PIER PAOLO PASOLINI BY DAVID SCHORR

in his novels and early movies, and later some of them became his favorite actors as he devised a more complex, metaphoric film mythology in *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, *Teorema*, *Oedipus Rex*, the "Trilogy of Life." Until his last years he idealized their primal "innocence," writing as late as 1970 that "in the Roman subproletarian slums there still exists the pre-Alpine spirit of clean lands and newly planted cedars."

One senses that the Roman boys with whom he had discovered an erotic life without guilt, when he came to the capital in his late 20s, had appropriated the remembered purity of Pasolini's first adolescent encounters in Friuli, the mountainous province northeast of Venice. He was forced to leave Friuli in 1949, after being convicted of committing "lewd acts" with minors in a nearby village. This first brush with authority led to Pasolini's losing his job as a schoolteacher, and to his expulsion from the local Communist Party. He fled with his mother to Rome, "as in a novel," to begin a new life.

A Violent Life is the second of Pasolini's novels about the city he discovered on his arrival. Originally published in 1959, it was issued by Jonathan Cape in William Weaver's translation in 1968, and has now been republished by Carcanet Press, which has recently been reprinting the work of a number of important modern Italian fiction writers. Like its predecessor, the somewhat more notorious *Ragazzi di vita* (1955)—when it appeared Pasolini was tried for obscenity and immediately became a best-selling author—*A Violent Life* begins in the shantytowns surrounding postwar Rome, and its protagonists are the shiftless and subliminally enraged youth of an industrializing culture that has left them behind. Both books aim to recreate the wildly creative argot of their characters (the novelist Carlo Emilio Gadda called *Ragazzi* "a sound track") as an index of the vitality that drew Pasolini so inexorably to them.

Pasolini had always been intensely interested in the local languages of Italy. His first book of poems, published when he was 20, was written in the Friulian dialect, and he edited two important anthologies of dialect poetry in the early 1950s. In writing his novels, he studied the dialect of his Roman friends with avidity. Enzo Siciliano reports in his intelligent biography of Pasolini that he would spend evenings at a pizzeria, "an open notebook in front of him," de-

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manding "particulars with the punctilious and quibbling manner of a professional linguist." As he wrote in the *Corrière della Séra* shortly before his death, about the Rome of the 1950s, "There was not a single moment of the day within the circle of districts which made up an immense plebeian metropolis when a linguistic invention did not echo through the streets or in the fights; a sign that this was a living culture."

TOMMASO Puzzili, the protagonist of *A Violent Life*, has grown up in Little Shanghai, a shanty village on the banks of a dirty stream on the western side of Rome. Pasolini portrays his life in a tightly organized series of scenes that cut cinematically from one to the next. We first see Tommaso as a young adolescent, hanging out with his friends and scrounging for a few lire. He approaches one of his teachers, whom we infer has been having a homosexual relationship with one of his friends. When he is ignored, Tommaso informs on the teacher. (This interesting inversion of Pasolini's own story is typical of his identification in the novel with the boys who are the objects of his desire, and of his generally unsympathetic portrayal of homosexuals.)

In later scenes, which are described with marvelous immediacy and verve, Tommaso and his friends attend a neofascist rally in the center of Rome, then steal a car and pull off a series of petty robberies. At dawn, Tommaso and his friend Lello are waiting for the streetcar to start running. Suddenly it appears and runs over the handsome Lello's foot. (As the novel progresses Tommaso appears more and more dispirited and weak, until he is virtually avoided by his former friends, a transparent symbol of hopelessness.) This chapter has all the concision, power, and operatic finality of a scene out of the Italian neorealist cinema—in which Pasolini was working at the time, writing scripts for Fellini, including *Nights of Cabiria*, which evokes the same Roman quasi-underworld.

As the boys grow up, the robberies get more daring and serious. Tommaso knifes someone and gets sent to prison for a couple of years. He returns to find his parents living in a new government housing project in which he takes inordinate pride. Tommaso decides to become respectable. He gets a job in a fish market and turns serious about his girlfriend, even selling himself to a man in a movie theater in order to get enough cash to take her out on Sunday. Then, in the most programmatic and least convincing episode in the book, Tommaso joins the Communist Party. He contracts tuberculosis—no doubt due to the dankness of the hovel in which he was raised—and takes part in a strike at the hospital where he has to spend several months.

One day there is a tremendous rainstorm and attendant flooding. People are drowning at Little Shanghai. Tommaso helps drag an old whore out of the mud. As a result his tuberculosis flares up again, and this time he fails to recover. Silently and stoically he dies in his bed at home, a hero of socialist labor.

THE STRENGTHS of *A Violent Life* are its powerful evocation of Tommaso's world; Pasolini's loving catalog of the squalor, violence, and vitality of Little Shanghai and its denizens; his cameo portraits of Tommaso and his friends Zimmío, Carletto, and Lello, the insolent familiarity of their interchanges, and their lack of hypocrisy about satisfying their immediate desires. The boys of *A Violent Life* radiate an iconic otherness that makes their world and their escapades as exciting as they are exotic.

The trouble is that, like all icons, they are essentially static, and the other characters, too—the boys' families and the girlfriends, for example—are walk-on parts without real dimension. However lively the action of the book in its chase scenes, sexual encounters, and so on, when Pasolini attempts to show Tommaso developing through his political education, the novel moves away from the intense, charged realism of its scene and begins to read like a tract. The contradiction is in effect the same one that Pasolini posits in "The Ashes of Gramsci": while he is with Tommaso in his mind and heart as he "grows" into political awareness—and in fact Pasolini made this happen for conscious political motives of his own, for he wanted at the time the book was written to realign himself with the Communist Party—his visceral attraction is undeniably to Tommaso in his "natural" state, as the unself-conscious vessel of his feelings, and to the unredeemed proletarian world that is venerated in Pasolini's loving evocation of its language.

Not surprisingly, Pasolini's linguistic tour de force is virtually impossible to recapture in translation. The slang of the sixties (part British and part American) that William Weaver used to approximate the inventive vulgarity of Pasolini's characters comes across as awkward and stilted today. One has to imagine a pungent verbal stew, intricate and elusive, a virtual closed system that even many Italian readers found nearly impenetrable. Even with this handicap, however, the book in English effectively evokes a highly specific world on the brink of vanishing.

Pasolini's idealization of his proletarian heroes did not survive the assault of the consumer culture on postwar Italian society. When he saw that the Romans had been lost to materialism, he shifted his allegiance to Naples, "the last great village with cultural traditions . . . which are not strictly Italian." Yet eventually and inevitably, the Neapolitans, too, disappointed him. In his "Trilogy of Life," the series of films he made in the early seventies based on *The Decameron*, *The Canterbury Tales*, and *The Arabian Nights*, he had made copious use of nudity, believing that " 'innocent' bodies, with the archaic, dark violence of their sexual organs" represented "the last bulwark of reality" against the onslaught of mass culture.

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But by 1975 Pasolini had decided that consumerism's "false" toleration of sexual liberation meant that "the reality of innocent bodies too had been violated, manipulated, and enslaved." "I now hate the bodies and the sex organs," he wrote, referring to the youth he had once adored as "human garbage": "imbeciles forced to be adorable; solid criminals forced to be pathetic; useless, vile creatures forced to be innocent and saintly." "Life," he concluded, "is a heap of insignificant and ironical ruins." (These quotations are taken from Pasolini's *Lutheran Letters*, a valuable collection of his pieces for the *Corrière della Séra* translated by Stuart Hood and also published by Carcanet.)

Not long after this, Pasolini was murdered by a boy who, as has been said many times, might have stepped out of one of his novels. Had time and history rendered the violent lives of his heroes more brutal than they were when he discovered them? Had they always been the "human garbage" he ultimately decided they were? Or had the radical innocents of *A Violent Life* always been the figments of his desiring imagination? Wherever the truth lies, it is undeniable that Pasolini's evocation of Tommaso's teeming environment—grounded as it is in his deep appreciation of language as the focus and metaphor for community—remains intensely real.

Like all bourgeois writers, he tended to sentimentalize, and thus to diminish those less privileged than himself. Yet as he himself recognized so presciently at the outset of his career, the cruel splendor of life itself, the eros of "the wretched enjoying the evening," defeated every idea he had about it. In the end one comes to feel that his attachment to what he felt he had lost outweighed his belief in the future, which makes him into a kind of radical conservative. His work is profoundly local and of its moment, and thus, as Susan Sontag has put it, "historically vulnerable." Yet this is indubitably one of the major reasons for its continuing interest. Though they have all but disappeared, Tommaso and his world remain very much alive.

JONATHAN GALASSI

Jonathan Galassi's edition of the selected essays of Eugenio Montale, *The Second Life of Art*, has recently been issued in paperback by Ecco Press.

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CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 6*

ject of investigation by the European Human Rights Commission and Amnesty International.

Mr. Melia is confident that "there is a peaceful constitutional process in place through which . . . grievances can be addressed." The people I have met in Northern Ireland are less so. They have constitutionally elected representatives from the nationalist Sinn Fein party, only to see them effectively disenfranchised by representatives loyal to Britain who have repeatedly adjourned local council meetings or bodily ejected Sinn Fein councillors. Nationalist people hesitate to bring lawsuits because they feel a fair trial is impossible: the judiciary is almost completely dominated by judges who favor union with Britain.

The Irish people Mr. Melia calls "murderers" are not mindless criminals. They are people who have exhausted every peaceful avenue for change and who believe their only hope for obtaining rights in their own country is to fight for them. America's Founding Fathers came to the same conclusion 210 years ago. We would be turning our backs on that heritage if we ratify the proposed extradition treaty.

JEANNE B. CLARIZIO
Hartford, Connecticut

PRO-PEROT

To the editors:

H. Ross Perot (1) trims millions of dollars in costs from an established government program, Medicare, by computerizing an antiquated accounting system, saving U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars, and (2) rescues totally innocent people from totally unjustified incarceration. Perot is then attacked by Nicholas von Hoffman in THE NEW REPUBLIC ("On Wings of Turkeys," June 16), a magazine that avowedly supports reducing the costs of worthy government programs like Medicare (while improving the quality) and denounces the incarceration of totally innocent people.

Come on, guys, Perot *might* have stretched the truth, and may have ballyhooed himself, but after reading your story, one gets the distinct impression that he has ripped off the American people via Medicare and has patently lied about his Iranian rescue mission. I have never seen such unfair treatment by THE NEW REPUBLIC.

TOM WILLIAMS
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Summer Daze

EACH YEAR, WHEN the first pestilent fogs of humidity descend on Washington, percolating my brain, I recall my favorite summer fantasy: sending Office Weenies to outdoor labor colonies in America's hottest locales. Some suitable work-study spots would include: Nogales, Arizona (roof tarring), Panama City, Florida (highway work), and Nitta Yuma, Mississippi (road-kill collection). This could be part of Gary Hart's compulsory national service program. The goal is to punish, yes, but also to teach. Useful lessons such as: working in a building with a 68-or-above air-conditioning limit does not constitute "hardship." And: cite-checking legal decisions isn't the world's most mindless task. I'm sure every decent-sized office could cough up one or two suitable victims. The man wearing Chaps cologne and Outback togs who carries an "All Things Considered" tote bag and complains about the seafood salad at Suppings, the gourmet carry-out downstairs. ("The scallops are like pencil erasers.") Or the woman who goes home early because fluorescent lights give her headaches. And anyone who clips episodes of "Cathy" and "Sally Forth," or leaves crabby little Just-a-Thot notes on the office frig. "WHO drank my Orangina? Plse REPLACE it. And cld evryone plse CLEAN OUT their old food cont'ners?" After a 45-hour bus ride (food intake restricted to Stuckey's Pecan Praline, Moon Pies, and Mountain Dew), the victims would arrive on-site at, let's say, the Ponderosa Turf Farm near Holcomb, Kansas, where I worked one hellish summer. After a mini-course in local aphorisms—"It's 104, but it's a *dry* 104"—they would plunge into their Sisyphean labors: ten hours a day cutting and loading 70-pound rolls of bluegrass sod that is taken to a new home and unrolled, creating an insty-lawn that survives in its alien environment (with daily drenchings) until blast-furnace summertime winds take their toll. Ah, now the memories are flowing. The ultimate horror was being forced to eat lunch at "the big house." This farm family ate with epic, splashing gusto, and their diet consisted of macaroni hot dish, Kool Aid, banana pudding, and a bowl filled with uncut starch supplement. The boss was a neo-cowboy named Bucky who used "Black Sheep" as his CB handle. Sometimes on the highway another trucker would see the sod and ask "what we was haulin'." The Sheep replied in an on-air voice so stylized that nobody understood it. "Weeebehawllinna . . . *loadasowd*, g'buddy." "Come back?" "Loadasowd." "Huh?" And so on. One time I grabbed the mike: "Sod! S-O-D. Turf. Bluegrass." Such behavior eventually got me fired. For our captive Weenies, however, smart-ass behavior would be awarded with another four-course starch meal.

IT'S WELL KNOWN that people seek abuse in the name of self-improvement, but I'm always amazed at how far they'll go. In Washington you can take an exercise class patterned after the Marines' basic training, complete with squat thrusts, push-ups, and an angry mesomorph calling you "candidate" and "puke." If your problem is flabby communications skills—so critical in the fast-paced, info-laden 1980s—you can pay $420 for eight sessions of "Acting for Professionals." As described by the *Washington Post*, "Participants crawl around the auditorium rug on all fours, curl and uncurl their bodies, pucker their lips and roll their heads, stretch, do jumping jacks while singing 'The Star-Spangled Banner,' followed by breathing exercises, standing in a circle and shouting such sounds as 'Bah! Fah! Ehh! Huh!' " Later, two students argue over an apple, no slugging allowed. ("I *want* the apple." "Give *me* the apple.") Impressive, but I know a way to suffer all this *and* get paid: join Washington's brigade of merciless pedestrian parking-ticket writers. Walking all day in D.C.'s summer heat, on pavement, you will lose weight you never knew you had. And hanging those $20 pink slips on people's cars will yield plenty of genuine "conflict situations."

MY SUMMER HOBBY IS gardening. I oversee a small vegetable patch containing Big Girl tomatoes, Burpless cucumbers, Big Max pumpkins, and plenty of Snopesy chicken-wire constructions. Through gardening, I have come to know the wisdom of an AM lawn-doctoring wizard named Jack Eden. (His show is called "Garden of Eden.") Eden describes the war between gardener and insect with a dramatic flair that can send you headlong to the nearest poison shoppe. His stories start innocently—"Tiny white butterflies flutter over your lawn . . ."—but they usually end with these "butterflies," a.k.a. gypsy moths, leading a dead-end gang of diazinon-crazed box elder bugs to a chewfest on your clapboards. Doc Eden also excels at the "let me put it this way" example that is crucial to getting through to the home gardener. Last week he explained that, because gypsy moths are about to "pupate" and enter cocoons, they won't eat any more leaves until next spring. Therefore, spraying them now would be a waste. "Let me put it another way," he said. "Spraying now would be like, well, like inviting people over to dinner, and when they get there, you've already *finished eating*." Check. "Or let's say you and the missus go to the opening of a play, but when you get there, everybody else is *leaving*. Because it's over!" O.K. Doc, got it. "Or—heh heh—imagine sending Christmas cards . . . 11 months early! Enough said." Right. Now I'm confused again.

PLEASE DON'T MISINTERPRET my earlier remarks about Office Weenies to mean that I work outside, or that I boycott air-conditioning. In fact, because my office is equipped only with an electric fan, summertime means lengthy "research trips" to local libraries. I favor George Washington University's chilly Gelman over the sweltering, Gramm-Rudmanized Library of Congress. Gelman also has what must be the world's largest browsing selection of academic journals, trade publications, and little magazines—including guaranteed producers of info-dyspepsia like *Accounting Historian's Journal* ("Evolution of Financial Statement Indexation in Brazil") and *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* ("On a Relationship between Generic Purchase and Deal Proneness"). Such material fills 12 24-foot stacks, with 12 shelves per side. I know because I paced and counted it, muttering and gasping as I went. A student got annoyed and blocked my way. "What are you *doing*?" A very officious guy. I just laid two withering eyeballs on what he had in his hand—*The Annals of Tourist Research*—and walked off. Enough said.

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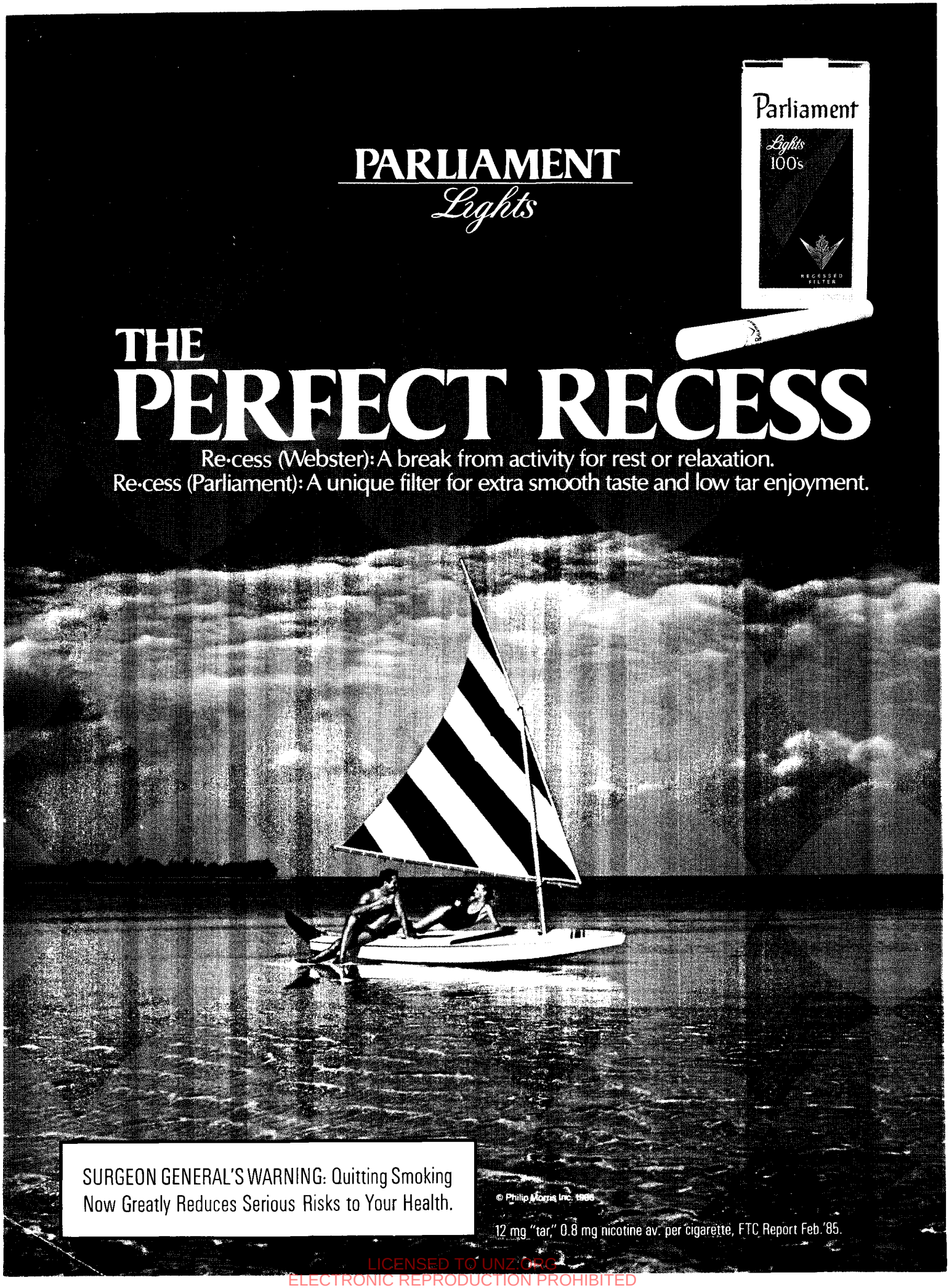
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Re·cess (Webster): A break from activity for rest or relaxation.
Re·cess (Parliament): A unique filter for extra smooth taste and low tar enjoyment.
SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.
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12 mg "tar," 0.8 mg nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Feb. '85.

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